

“Be a Love-Sick Fool for Christ’s Sake!”

5th Sunday of Ordinary Time (Sunday before Ash Wednesday)

Deacon Rick Moser

2018! The year is only 42 days old. Yet, already...

We had a **Blue Moon** (once every 2.7 years), a **Super Moon** (a few times a year), a **Wolf Moon** (once a year in January) and a **Red Moon** (couple times a year)(an eclipse), all on the same night!

That’s a **Super Blue Blood Moon** (first time in 150 years), and...

Philadelphia won the Super Bowl! That’s the first time ever! Maybe we should start time over again!

What else is coming? It's going to be quite a year!

And now! This Wednesday, February 14th is Valentines Day, it is also Ash Wednesday, or is it more correct to say that Ash Wednesday is also “St. Valentines Day.” **Depends on which you put first.**

Just so you know, the **Church** puts Ash Wednesday first. We do have to fast and abstain from meat.

The “**world**” doesn’t even see Ash Wednesday; they see “Mardi Gras” on Tuesday, followed by Valentines Day, Their creed, their belief...“Let’s Party.”

That’s not all! Easter Sunday this year falls on April 1st; often referred to as “April Fools Day.”

The last time this match-up occurred was in 1945, about the time I was conceived.

Connection or not? I don't know!

What does this coincidence mean? Does it mean anything?

Which celebration should be greater?

To the “world;” we already know that answer, but what does this coincidence mean **to us?**

I say, let's celebrate them all, and celebrate all four of them together! **They really belong together.**

On Valentines Day, We celebrate our love for another.

As children, we give valentine cards to everyone in the class, even if we don’t like them!

On Ash Wednesday, we begin to prepare for the great out-pouring of Sacrificial Love that Christ offers to us on Good Friday. His actions are often referred to as “**The Folly of the Cross!**”

1Corinthians (1:18-20) says, “The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

“For it is written: “*I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the learning of the learned I will set aside.*

Where is the wise one? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age?

Has not God made the wisdom of the world foolish?” So, I ask you...

Is there any chance that we have seen nonsense in the world today?

In today’s Gospel, Jesus gives us a very good example of love, love for another.

Jesus loved and cured a leper. Just in touching the leper, Jesus was considered ritually unclean.

The leper, in coming close to Jesus committed a capital offense. He could have been stoned to death.

Neither one of them cared.

Love does foolish things!

Jesus says to us, “*Love you neighbor as yourself.*” “*Love one another as I have love you.*”

Sometimes our love for each other makes us do foolish things.

Sometimes we want to do foolish things.

How many of you husbands have put on a tutu and danced just to make your wife laugh.

“Yeah, me neither!”

When we’re love-sick, we do foolish things.

So, Let’s put Ash Wednesday, Valentines’ Day, Easter Sunday and April Fools Day together and be “Love-sick Fools for Christ’s Sake!”

- Jesus asked Peter, Andrew, James and John to follow Him; they dropped their nets and followed Him. They were fools for Christ's Sake!
- St. Peter was a fool! He got out of the boat and walked on water. That was foolish!
- But, he had to get out of the boat first; that was courageous!
- Lazarus' sister, Mary, poured a pound of nard over Jesus' feet (actually valued at \$40,000 today).
- That's foolish. **Love is foolish.** Mary was love-sick!
- Jesus told the young man, seeking perfection; to sell all he had, give the money to the poor and then follow Jesus. Unfortunately, the young man thought that was too foolish.
- We all love St. Francis of Assisi; he was known as a "Christ's Fool." He even kissed a leper!

If we really love someone, we would never hurt them or wish harm on them.

But, if we are **love-sick**, we would not even think of being grumpy or sarcastic to them. We would go "out of our way" to be kind, extra-kind, to be patient and helpful; **to look** for ways, even little ways, to show our love for them.

Because we love God, we avoid mortal sin at all costs.

If we are **love-sick** for God, we would be heart-sick if we hurt Him in even the smallest way. We would never gossip, be unkind, be impatient or angry with those He loves, not because those people are so good, but because God is so good, and He loves them, and He loves us, so much!

If we are love-sick for God, love Him with abandon, love Him with trust; surrender yourself to Him and His Mother.

We say we don't have enough time; we don't have enough money..

Be foolish, take a chance; give your time and your money away anyway.

Give all to Christ; if we keep it for ourselves, we will just waste it.

Give your time, give your gifts, give yourself, be impulsive, give your love, don't hold back.

Love replaces itself as fast as it is spent because the source of all Love is infinite!

Love isn't Love unless it's given; **Love is an "active verb."**

When exercising a muscle, the more we exercise, the bigger the muscle get.

By loving and exercising the heart, the heart grows larger and can hold even more love than before, More love to give. Be a Love-Sick fool!

If you need something, if you know someone who is dying, someone who needs to come back to the Church or someone who really needs assistance. Pray like a love-sick fool.

If you don't like the world we live in, Pray and fast for It!

It may be the only thing that works!

If you are suffering, and we all are, connect it to Christ's suffering on the Cross.

Don't complain about it!

Make this a "Whine-Less Lent."

It hurts like @&#%, but in three days, we rise from the dead.

So, let us take this incidence of the "Super Blue Blood Wolf Moon" and this Ash Wednesday/Valentines Day and Easter Sunday/April Fools Day alignment as a sign from God for us to:

Say, "No," to the foolishness of this "world," and let us all become

Love-Sick Fools for Christ's Sake.