

I want to talk about a national day of reconciliation. This is an effort by both Houses to identify what needs to be done to reconcile the Nation and past and present problems.

We are at the beginning of a new administration and at the beginning of a new millennium. This would be a good time to do this.

It is a simple proposition, a basic proposition of what we need to do to identify—something we should have done—and correct past wrongs. I am hoping we can identify and move that forward without difficulty and controversy. It will be a very healthy exercise.

It is also healthy to recognize the basis of some of these days we celebrate. That is why I put forward this notion of reconciliation on Valentine's Day. It is a lot more than just hearts, cards, and candy.

I commend to the Senate an article written by Mark Merrill in the Washington Times today. He is president of Family First, an independent, non-profit research group that strengthens families. He supports the story of Valentine, the true Valentine. I understand there are three St. Valentines. All three were martyred. All three were tremendously dedicated to other individuals and to helping them.

The one he identifies is the first Valentine. It is quite a story. I ask unanimous consent to print this article in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Times, Feb. 14, 2001]

SACRIFICIAL LOVE—ST. VALENTINE'S  
CONTRIBUTION TO LOVE AND COMMITMENT  
(By Mark W. Merrill)

Do you know the real story behind Valentine's Day? It goes way beyond hearts, cards and candy. It is a story of love, sacrifice and commitment.

In the third century, the Roman Empire was ruled by Claudius Gothicus. He was nicknamed "Claudius the Cruel" because of his harsh leadership and his tendency for getting into wars. In fact, he was in so many wars that he was having a difficult time recruiting soldiers.

Claudius believed that recruitment for the army was down because Roman men did not want to leave their loves or families behind, so he canceled all marriages and engagements in Rome. Thousands of couples saw their hopes of matrimony dashed by the single act of a tyrant.

But a simple Christian priest named Valentine came forward and stood up for love. He began to secretly marry soldiers before they went off to war, despite the emperor's orders. In 269 AD, Emperor Claudius found out about the secret ceremonies. He had Valentine thrown into prison and ordered him put to death.

He gave his life to that couples could be bonded together in holy matrimony. They may have killed the man, but not his spirit. Even centuries after his death, the story of Valentine's self-sacrificing commitment to love was legendary in Rome. Eventually, he was granted sainthood and the Catholic church decided to create a feast in his honor. They picked Feb. 14 because of the ancient belief that birds (particularly lovebirds and doves) began to mate on that very day.

So what are you doing to keep the love in your marriage? While gifts, candlelight dinners and sweet words are nice, the true spirit of Valentine's Day needs to last year-round.

Here are some ways to bring more love into your marriage:

Schedule priority time together. Pull out your calendars and set a date night every week or two—just to spend time together and talk. (Note: Movies don't count)

Laugh together. When was the last time you shared a funny story and chuckled with each other? Loosen up and laugh freely. Live lightheartedly.

Play together. Find a hobby or activity you both enjoy—fishing, bowling, tennis, hiking, biking or crossword puzzles.

Be romantic together. Send your spouse a note of encouragement in the mail every once in awhile just to say, "I love you."

However, you choose to express yourself, do it in the spirit of the selfless Saint Valentine—who not only took a stand for love—he gave his life for it.

Mr. BROWNBACK. I will read portions of the article because it is so instructive about what Valentine's Day is about.

In the 3rd century, the Roman Empire was ruled by Claudius Gothicus. He was nicknamed "Claudius the Cruel"—

That is a pretty auspicious name for an emperor—

because of his harsh leadership and tendency for getting into wars. In fact, he was in so many wars he was having a difficult time recruiting soldiers.

Claudius believed that recruitment for the Army was down because Roman men did not want to leave their loves or their families behind. . . .

So what do you do if you are emperor and cannot get people to sign up? He banned the institution of marriage and said there was not going to be marriage allowed anymore.

Thousands of couples saw their hopes for matrimony dashed by the single act of a tyrant.

But a simple Christian priest named Valentine came forward and stood up for love. He began to secretly marry soldiers before they went off to war, despite the emperor's orders. In 269 AD, Emperor Claudius found out about the secret ceremonies. He had Valentine thrown into prison and ordered him put to death.

He gave his life so couples could be bonded together in holy matrimony. They may have killed the man, but not his spirit. Even centuries after his death, the story of Valentine's self-sacrificing commitment to love was legendary in Rome. Eventually, he was granted sainthood and the Catholic church decided to create a feast in his honor. They picked February 14 because of the ancient belief that birds (particularly lovebirds and doves) began to mate on that very day.

I think it is interesting to look back into the history of why it is we celebrate certain days and when we celebrate them. There is usually a beautiful story, this tapestry of something of beauty in our heritage that I always think of in redigging that well and seeing what is there.

---

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.  
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in adjournment until 10 a.m., Thursday, February 15, 2001.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 5:02 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 15, 2001, at 10 a.m.