

2/14/06

Happy Valentine's Day

by
Tom Holbrook

Happy Valentine's Day!!! Ladies, I guess this is your day historically when we, the lower male gender, get to tell you how much we love you, need you, can't get along without you, and thank goodness you're in our life. If we don't forget we also sometimes give you flowers you usually can't smell, chocolate you love but say you shouldn't eat, and dinner out at a really nice restaurant we really can't afford. All that aside, you know we really do love you more than life itself and are truly glad the good Lord put the two of us together. Not to make any waves, but is it okay for the female of the species to shower gifts and candy on her special guy? Not that I would really appreciate a box of candy or flowers, but a new putter or pair of golf shoes would really go over big with me.

There's a rumor that Valentine's Day was started by a consortium of Florists and Greeting Card companies. I actually had thought that myself, skeptic that I am, but my vast research turned up some interesting facts about this hallowed day including why February 14th was chosen as the day of honor.

According to my sources in Ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honor Juno, Queen of the Roman Gods and Goddesses. The following day was the festival of Lupercalia which was a feast to a heathen God. During these times boys and girls were segregated. However, the young people had a custom that began on the eve of the Festival of Lupercalia. The girl's names were written on pieces of paper and inserted into jars. Each boy then drew a girl's name from the jar and they were partners throughout the Festival. After being paired, the children would often continue to see each other throughout the year and on occasion even fell in love and got married. Then enters politics, per usual. Emperor Claudius II of Rome, also known as Claudius the Cruel was having a difficult time recruiting men as soldiers. He believed that the men did not want to leave their sweethearts and cancelled all engagements and marriages throughout Rome. St. Valentine, a priest of Rome at the time, secretly married couples. He was eventually caught, arrested and condemned. He was beaten to death and beheaded on February 14th, around the year 270.

Pastors and priests of the early Christian church did away with the pagan custom by replacing the names of the girls with the names of saints. They chose St. Valentine's Day as the day of celebration for the new feast because of his contribution to keeping marriage alive in Rome. So, ladies, when you get your Valentine's Card this year remember that poor priest who gave his all that you might be honored.

When I was in 3rd and 4th grade I always looked forward to Valentine's Day. Each student would create his own fairly large mailbox at home with a slit in the side and his name on the outside of the box, brightly covered of course with red paper, hearts, etc., and placed on top of one another behind a make believe post office wall the teacher fabricated... which, as I think back, was in the coat room. We would all buy individual Valentines with envelopes and drop them into the students' personal mailboxes. What a fantastic thrill to go home and open my very own mail box, with 20 or so positive messages of love... and looking especially for one from that cute little girl in the front row.

Guys, I hope you have taken the time to properly show your love to that special lady in your life. Her presence is something you should never take for granted. Let each day be Valentine's Day in telling your wife you love her and backing up that talk with the walk. And don't worry about whether she did or didn't get you a Valentine's Card... that loving smile on her face, greeting you each morning will be the greatest Valentine you could ever receive.

See you next week.

#