

## PURITY IS PRO-LIFE

*By Brendan and Elly Roberts*

The cataclysmic pressure to belong and measure up to the standard of the secular world leads most people to give in to having sex outside of the covenant of marriage. Most high school students including adults are succumbing to the wrong belief that sex is necessary in expressing their love and in order to be loved in return. These pressures are even helping to kill young people who abuse themselves or others as they indulge in pornography and sexual relationships rather than seeking love God's way and valuing purity which eradicates the need for contraception and thus abortion from even coming into the equation.

Our love story is inspiring many people that it is certainly possible to find love God's way. Below is our God-written love story featuring each other's side of the story:

**ELLY:** I had been praying for a man who would look at me not with lust, but with gratitude to God for His beautiful creation. I vowed to save my purity until my wedding night despite being laughed at for my advocacy for chastity. I thought that prayer was a far cry as I have been broken hearted by men who walked out from my life after I told them I'm not giving my body without a wedding ring on my finger and the commitment that comes with it. However, God answered my prayer in such a way far beyond my imagination. I went through sudden tragic deaths of my loved-ones when I gave up a promising career to pursue my love for writing. I didn't know when, how, & where to start. At my lowest point I ran to the Lord in an Adoration chapel. I was focused on my prayer journal, unaware of the pair of beautiful eyes which were looking at me with utter admiration.

**BRENDAN:** As an author of 5 books, I went on a personal mission to the Philippines to spread messages of God's love within the Catholic faith. I walked into an Adoration chapel and then felt beauty assaulting my senses. *"She's very pretty"* I thought. I kept stealing glances at her. She was flicking through a prayer journal with screeds of handwritten notes. *"Wow, she also keeps a prayer journal!"* I waited and waited for her to finish her time of prayer. I wanted to say hello and give her my calling card. It seemed like an eternity and she was still lost in prayer and her prayer journal. I went up to the glass cabinet in which the Blessed Sacrament resided. I put my hand on the glass as I had observed many Filipinos doing to demonstrate their love of the Lord and receive His graces.

**ELLY:** Reading my prayer journal made me recall how God had been faithful to me in the past and so with tears I begged God and uttered a bold prayer, *"Lord, I know You called me to be Your writer. Now Lord, please give me a writing mentor."* I opened my eyes and there in front of the Blessed Sacrament I saw a man. In the silence of my heart I heard God's voice that said: *"He is the one"*. I panicked, my heart was pounding heavily as I asked God, *"Lord, do you mean 'the one' as my mentor or 'the one' I've been waiting for?"*

**BRENDAN:** After I adored the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament I went to the back of the chapel and sat down to wait. *Big mistake!* This was a woman of prayer! I waited and waited for her to finish her time but she still did not budge and so I waited for people to leave the chapel. *"If only we were the only ones in the chapel it would be easier to talk to her"* I thought. Finally realising she wasn't going to finish anytime soon, I wrote on my calling card. With my heart pounding and nerves galore I approached her. *What will she think of me? Will she want to keep in contact?* I gave her the card. Then I walked out of the chapel and I thought out of her life.

**ELLY:** I couldn't understand why my heart was racing when I accepted his calling card. With trembling hands, I read what was written on the card, *"Hi. I'm a Catholic missionary and author from NZ..."* I couldn't read the rest of his message anymore as my tears blurred my vision with the thought, *"I prayed for a mentor and he is an author! Wow!"* Amazed at how God answered my prayer for a writing mentor right after uttering my prayer, I invited him for breakfast where we chatted for three hours like long lost friends.



**BRENDAN:** I was astounded when Elly asked me to be her writing mentor. No one had ever asked me to fill such a role. I was delighted that she was into living purity and wanting to inspire others to do so. Everything started from there. We attended Mass almost daily at St. Francis Church, which has the Adoration Chapel where we first met. We had a morning routine of running together at six in the morning then we would share our reflections from the Gospel. That deepened our friendship until we became best friends.

**ELLY:** He comforted me and wiped my tears with his shirt when I was crying over a man I thought I loved. He listened to the cries of my heart. Since then, he had always been with me in my ups and downs. As our friendship deepened, I realized I was falling for him. Since I was a victim of an unlabelled relationship in the past, I had the courage to tell him about how I felt. My heart was shattered when Brendan said he only see me as his younger sister. I told him we couldn't continue our friendship as it would hurt me seeing him with someone else.

**BRENDAN:** To me it takes time for love to blossom. It wasn't enough for me that I passed her list of non-negotiables. I wanted to hear that there was also physical attraction and not just because I am her ideal man for being a faithful Catholic and living purity as well. I encouraged her to continue our friendship as it brings joy to my life and to pursue the mission of writing a book together. She agreed and our friendship gave birth to our co-authored book "Worth The Chase (Finding Love God's Way)". The message of our book is of great love, forgiveness, healing of the broken-hearted and the reality of our true value in relation to finding pure, authentic love as sons and daughters of God. How ironic that while we were busy writing the book, God was also at work writing our love story.

**ELLY:** Everything wasn't smooth sailing though. I was completely shocked to receive a message from Brendan telling me that he needed me to comfort him. When I saw him cry for the first time, my heart just broke. I wanted to take away his pain. Something happened that might separate us forever. I was afraid of the thought that I'd never see him again.

**BRENDAN:** I was giving a presentation to a local Church community called CFC Singles For Christ. When I returned to where I was staying I found several messages from my home, New Zealand. My world fell apart when I found out that Stephen, my closest brother died. I was in complete shock. But God had one angel in store for me, Elly. When I told her my distress she comforted me. She held my hand, interlocking my fingers in hers, which was so heart-warming and she stroked my head on her lap. This comforting eased the pain. I cried in her arms. I returned to New Zealand for my brother's funeral and had to leave my best friend. I was actually leaving a joy in my heart in Manila. While in New Zealand we kept in contact through Skype and Facebook and our feelings continued to deepen until I asked her to be my girlfriend. I knew I couldn't leave our relationship as undefined. It was not fair on her.

**ELLY:** "Will you be my girlfriend?" His question left me stunned. I told him to hold on as I wanted to get confirmation from God first. I had been single for 6 years since my last failed relationships with men who couldn't accept my decision of staying pure until marriage. After that I fell in love with someone who wasn't man enough to define our relationship and instead left me hanging. I vowed to myself that I would be very careful to whom I would give my heart. At first the 19 years gap between Brendan and I mattered to me until God inspired me to ask two powerful questions which really mattered: *"Is he a man after God's own heart?"* and *"Is he into purity?"* Brendan is very passionate in living a life of purity. He shared how he had always kept his pants on during his past relationships despite being teased for being a virgin in his 40's. He didn't mind people laughing at him as long as he knew he glorifies God. The answers to my questions were both yes so I gave him my sweetest yes! To cut the long story short, Brendan and I got married in the same Church where we first met. **In the same place where Brendan gave me a calling card on the first day we met, he gave me a wedding ring on our wedding day with a lifetime commitment of love that comes with it.**

We acknowledge that following God's call to seek after purity is very challenging and can even be lonely. But we should seek inspiration from saints such as St Agnes who gave their lives because purity was so sacred to them. By following God's will we are truly fulfilled. All other feelings of happiness, even sexual happiness is short-term. Like an athlete trains for his or her sport, we need to focus and train our minds and souls when it comes to living and even loving the virtues.



As Pope Benedict XVI puts it, *"The period of engagement, very necessary in order to form a couple, is a time of expectation and preparation that needs to be lived in purity of gesture and words. It allows you to mature in love, in concern and in attention for each other; it helps you to practise self-control and to develop your respect for each other. These are the characteristics of true love that does not place emphasis on seeking its own satisfaction or its own welfare."*

Sacred scripture esteems purity for everyone: "Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart (Psalm 73:1)."; "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8)."; "To the pure, all things are pure...(Titus 1:15)"; and "And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure (1 John 3:3)."

Purity is pro-life because we seek to love God's way. We acknowledge that contraception blocks the gift of any life, when God wants us to love through a covenant which is free, total, faithful and always open to the supreme gift of life. Natural Family Planning should aim to delay for good reasons any supreme gift.

Our mission is one for both singles and married couples to love their Christian faith, seeking a life of purity, and knowing that God is always merciful to receive us back in His loving arms, especially through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, when we wander away from him. We are pro-life and seek to inspire others through our apologetics through public speaking, our books, and writing articles for printed publications and the internet. We are always seeking partners in our mission to inspire as many people as possible through our ministry. God has placed an enormous mission on our hearts and we are so excited in seeing God's faithfulness in our ministry.

