

An Anniversary Prayer

Prayer offered by Richard A. Rhem
at the 50th Anniversary Celebration
of Glenn and Arlene Yoas

December 13, 2013

Oh God, Eternal One,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
in the midst of this happy celebration
we pause consciously to experience and to acknowledge your presence,
present to us.

We do so naturally at life's critical junctures,
life's moments awash with meaning –
those moments that cause our hearts to sing or to break,
our minds to be radiant with light and illumination
or numb in somber darkness.

We pause; we are still.
We are present to you who are present to us –
the presence of Mystery in whom and before whom
our lives are played out.

In the quietness of this moment,
we pause to give thanks for the fifty years of life together
shared by Glenn and Arlene –
for their love and faithfulness,
for the richness of their experiences,
for the model they are
of strength and steadiness,
of faith and devotion.

We celebrate their years as lovers, partners, friends,
and we give you thanks that, as children, grandchildren and friends,
we can share these moments with them.

Memories wash over us of special times and seasons.
The film of fifty years flashes through our minds –
times when we laughed until the tears
washed over our cheeks;
times when the struggle was intense,
and the goal far off;
times when dreams came true,

and times when dreams were shattered;
times when joy burst the soul,
and times when grief filled the heart;
times of health and strength;
times when health seemed threatened and the future put in question.

Oh God,
we remember with laughter and with tears,
and we own it all,
the whole long, wonderful, fragile, perilous, beautiful journey.
For it is the tapestry of two lives lived well,
lived fully, authentically, before your face –
a tapestry with entwining threads
of all the colors of the rainbow:
brighter and more somber tones, light and shadow.
And through it all your presence, your faithfulness,
even your presence in absence.

We give you thanks, O God, for your grace
that has enabled them to be all they are,
and we seek your benediction upon them
as they move beyond this significant landmark.

Fill their future years with the richness of harvest,
enabling them to savor the fruits
of their love and labor.
Favor them with good health and even new adventure.
Surround them with the loving care of their children,
the happy exuberance of their grandchildren,
and embrace of the circle of their friends.

May your mercy be experienced with every breaking dawn
and peace mantle them with every golden sunset.
And as they gaze on the grandeur of the night's starry heaven,
may they know themselves enwrapped together
in the Mystery of the abyss of your steadfast love.

With gratitude we gather around these tables,
acknowledging the gifts of bread and wine.
And in the midst of this joyous feast,
we remember the one who broke bread and poured the cup,
and has become for us the Bread of Life, the Wine of New Creation,
the one whose birth we celebrate in this beautiful season
of Advent and Christmas –
Jesus Christ our Lord.