

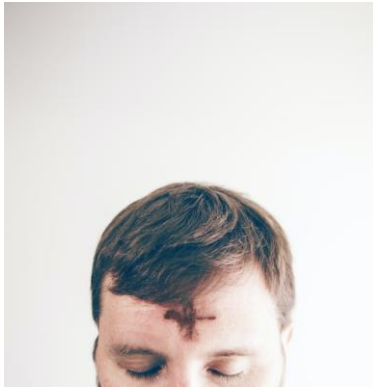
Love Moves and Breaks and Surprises

by Peter Covington

Love seems to move on its own—sometimes like wind or water moving with a natural force towards a low point, or like an animal with a will of its own. Love moves in ways in which we cannot easily predict. After all, God is love, so perhaps love has God’s ability to move, act, and surprise us.

Sometimes Love moves past, and in spite of our plans, takes us by surprise where it emerges and with what things are caught in its whiskers, like a wild animal that has been foraging in the underbrush.

Luis and I experienced this on Ash Wednesday. We are still new enough to each other that we negotiate activities around holidays, and especially around holy



days, coming from different Christian traditions. So when I came home from work that day, he had dinner ready but I took some ash from a burnt out candle, anointed us and prayed for God’s blessing. Luis said a few words as a reminder that ashes represent our mortality. With this common understanding, we ate quickly so we could participate in the MCCDC Ash Wednesday service online, and sat close on the bed where we could both see the computer.

But unfortunately we were not able to participate because apparently Love had something else in mind. I fumbled with the video streaming apps on the church website for about 30 minutes before I discovered that the service was going out on Zoom. By that point, we didn’t have much time left with the service, so I clicked on a You-Tube video of groups across Ireland singing “Be Thou My Vision” and after that, You-Tube automatically rolled into a video of English groups singing another hymn. It was moving and I translated some of the key phrases.

By this point, we were settled in and comfortable together, and I suggested we find an actual Ash Wednesday service in Spanish. We found a spirited Catholic priest in Michigan preaching about remembering that our life comes from God. Luis and I were moved and thankful for this spiritual input as we begin our lives as a couple before God and cuddled more actively as we continued to listen and whisper about our spirituality as a couple. It was a wonderful feeling to be

united with my man, in remembering our mortality in humility , and it was an unexpected, happy moment as Love came in and licked us profoundly.

It is always good to remember that Love is not a tame thing but moves and breaks and surprises at unexpected times and in unexpected ways.