

GOD'S LIGHT OF LOVE

By Ellen Mongan



IF YOU WERE TO LIGHT A SMALL CANDLE IN A VERY dark room, the entire room would be illuminated. It is that way also with light of God's love infused into hearts, which He uses to draw others to Himself. God uses people as a "lighthouse" to guide others toward heaven.

One of my husband's favorite ministries is to teach a Christian approach to "End of Life" decisions. As both a physician and a deacon it is a perfect fit. Educating others about death, dying and suffering helps bring clarity, guiding the dying and their caregivers along unknown paths.

A few years ago my husband gave this talk in Lady Lake, Florida. The room was filled with people but, one man in the audience stood out. He raised his hand to give a comment. It was timely: while the speakers gave information, he was living it. After the talk ended, I walked over to introduce myself. His name was John Murphy. I encouraged him to meet my husband. It was a "God encounter." It was God's way of guiding John through a very difficult time in his life, the final dance with his wife Arline.

The past five years we have cultivated our friendship with this adorable couple. We have gotten to know Arline through John's

voice. Arline spoke volumes to us about God's love, without saying a word. When God presented her with this very heavy cross she accepted it with grace. She was suffering from a neurologic disease, PSP (similar to Lou Gehrig's disease) that had taken her voice, walking ability and freedom from her. She never complained or gave up. She became an example to all of a "suffering servant." Her sufferings drew her and others closer to Jesus. Arline walked in God's amazing grace.

We all know that true love is more than flowers, candy, and romantic evenings, walking the beach together under the moonlight. True love picks you up when you are down and stands by you when you cannot stand at all. Theirs was true love. Their love story began by John asking Arline to dance over fifty years ago. On that day Arline danced into John's heart forever. Their love grew and carried them through a lifetime in "good times and bad, in sickness and in health." Their marriage was a demonstration of living through God's grace.

John walked the road of suffering by her side. He shouldered one side of her cross as Arline carried the other. Carrying the cross together made it seem a bit lighter. Then when Arline could not run the race any longer on her own, God called upon John to help her finish the race. John, an ordinary husband, became extraordinary. With the help of God he fed, diapered, and bound Arline's wounds. John entertained, kissed, loved and cared for his beloved Arline in every way. The road was hard, and spanned much time, sometimes with only tears to water their dry weary souls. Their love for each other helped them persevere.

John carried Arline over the threshold on their wedding day welcoming her into his life forever. Their "I do's," stood the test of time. She was John's light of love and John the light of Arline's love. Now nearing, at the end of her race, John now carried Arline over the finish line. Arline saved the last dance for John. He remained at her side until she took her last breath. It was their final, "Goodbye!"

Arline and John walked a road of suffering that few take. They were used by God as a “lighthouse,” guiding others to the heart of God. The message of their journey can only be seen with the eyes of the Spirit. Arline taught the world to not be afraid of suffering. She and her husband demonstrated to the world that love is action, not just words. Their journey of oneness was plainly seen. Arline was a woman who walked in God's “Amazing Grace.” She made a difference in this world. With God, nothing is impossible!

When John and Airline married their life was an empty canvas. On it God painted a portrait in full color of what married life should look like. All that viewed their life together could see that God was the light of their love!