

The Scribes and the Pharisees kept the rules. They maintained their status. They protected the Status Quo. They may even have been fanatical about what they could achieve.

But their observance went no deeper than the letter of the law

Their perception no greater than definition

They had no love

She had been told that she must keep her eye on the ball. That as the corner came in, she must move back from the defender and hope that she would get a free header. As she rose in her leap, the eyes must remain open. Then hit ball with her forehead down and towards goal.

These were all the instructions which training had made automatic.

But when she scored the goal, it was not the following of the instructions that pleased her. But the joy, the passion the love of the game.

Do it for love

He picked her up from the front of her new flat. Carpet shopping, he was going carpet shopping. What did he know about carpets? What did he care what colour it was? But she was so proud of her new home. She was not even looking for the bank of Dad to pay for it. She just needed help, support, someone who cared.

As a Father he knew he had obligations. As a parent he was aware that the child grows in independence over a number of years. He did not have to be there. But he wanted to be there. Not simply to fulfil his obligations, but because he loved her.

He did it for love

Prayer in life had often been inspired by crisis. The urgent pleading for a sick parent, or foolish child. Now prayer was less dramatic and more valid. During working life attendance at a weekly mass seemed something done by the older people. Now a member of the older people, it had become custom. A reason to discipline the morning. The means by which breakfast did not seep into lunch. A familiar trip out of the front door, and into that quiet sacred space.

It was not done, for access to eternal happiness. Neither were the debts of guilt being paid. No holier than any other member of the parish it just seemed that this was a good way to start the day.

So it was not done for no other reason than love

It was done for love

OK it is good to keep the rules

But play the game for love

Fulfil your duty to the children for love

Say your prayers, not in a vain attempt to win favour

Do it for love

Do it for love

Do it for love