

December 2010

## "If Only They Could Know"

Thomas J. Jewel  
*St. John Fisher College*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/verbum>



Part of the Religion Commons

## [How has open access to Fisher Digital Publications benefited you?](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Jewel, Thomas J. (2010) ""If Only They Could Know"," *Verbum*: Vol. 8 : Iss. 1 , Article 13.  
Available at: <https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/verbum/vol8/iss1/13>

This document is posted at <https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/verbum/vol8/iss1/13> and is brought to you for free and open access by Fisher Digital Publications at St. John Fisher College. For more information, please contact [fisherpub@sjfc.edu](mailto:fisherpub@sjfc.edu).

---

## "If Only They Could Know"

### Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Teenager. Like most of the developmental stages of our young – the stage of —teenager|| can be described but never really understood until one travels that stretch of road for oneself with their teen. During a recent trip down a particularly tumultuous part of that path I recall wishing, yet again, —If only they could understand and know the depth of the love we have for them – one they can so apparently not see at this point in their lives." A reflection that leads only to deeper thoughts about the immensity of this thing called —a parents love."



*Deacon Tom Jewell*

## **“If Only They Could Know”**

Teenager. Like most of the developmental stages of our young – the stage of “teenager” can be described but never really understood until one travels that stretch of road for oneself with their teen. During a recent trip down a particularly tumultuous part of that path I recall wishing, yet again, “If only they could understand and know the depth of the love we have for them – one they can so apparently not see at this point in their lives.” A reflection that leads only to deeper thoughts about the immensity of this thing called “a parents love.”

If only they could know: it is a love like your own little personal nuclear reaction ever burning in your heart. Silently giving you the power you need to traverse the issues and rants of the teen years from dating and friends to work and responsibilities. Existing controlled yet always on the brink of raging into an explosion of emotion that wants to grab and hold them screaming, “Stay! Don’t leave me! Remain – little, like the days gone by.”

If only they could know: it is a Corinthian-esque love that “hopes all things; believes all things” yet knows better. A hope, each day new, for all the good things in life to be theirs realizing from experience none of that will come without first facing the hardships and struggles of daily living.

If only they could know: it is a love so powerful it is never diminished by not seeing eye-to-eye – seemingly on everything. Never lessened by squabble or row but, in fact, growing only stronger through these things - unbeknownst as it is at the time.

If only they could know: it is a love that lives in an always-optimistic present while at the same time existing with an under-current of fear of the unknown tomorrow – an accident; a relationship gone bad; another issue you could, but dare not, explain. You simply have to be present to them as they figure it out, and often deal with it, themselves.

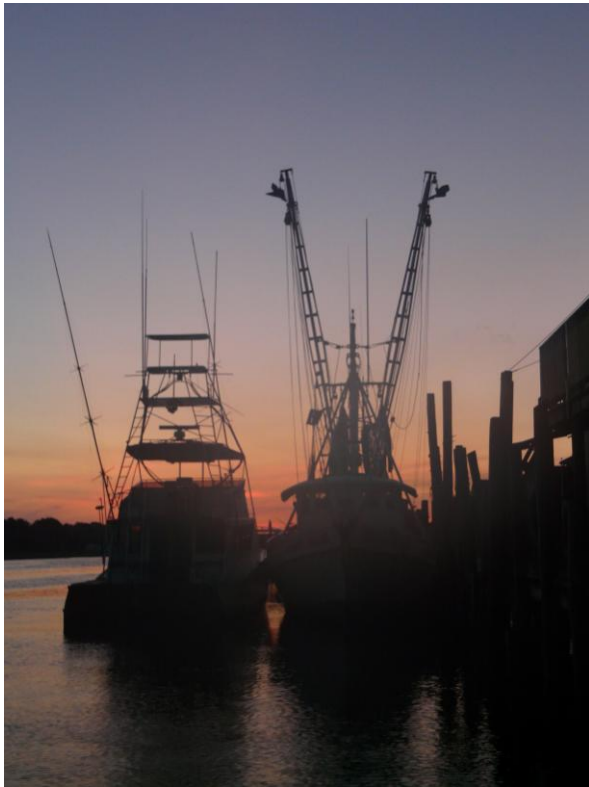
If only they could know: it is a self-sacrificing kind of love. One that, like some surrealistic-energizer-bunny-thing, keeps on giving and giving even when it is overlooked, under-appreciated and largely misconstrued simply because that’s what a parent does.

If only they could know: it is a love that wishes it could supplant our own sinfulness through our very want: for them to be better, stronger, wiser; more capable, faithful, dependable than we ever were. Realizing they too are flawed yet seeing only the good, the beautiful, and the promise they possess.

If only they could know: it is, at least to me, so clearly a love that should have been declared “sacrament” as surely as anything that now exists for some reason gone neglected, or ignored, - misunderstood perhaps by those responsible for determining such ecclesial matters who may never have experienced or realized such a power for themselves. For it is truly a love that only another parent can fully appreciate or understand. Parenthood/family – so neatly tucked into the sacrament of “marriage” yet, I believe, secretly longing to escape and be its own sign of God’s bountiful grace present in the world – “let the little children come” as Jesus once uttered. Recounted thrice.

If only they could know: it is, finally, a love that is unbound by the confines of this lifetime. A love that, as surely as I know anything, exists beyond the beyond - when life for each parent changes from this to the next our love for each child will go with us. I know this as a child myself loved by a Parent whose love for me is everything I have stated and more – waiting patiently for the moment of this very last love I describe to come to be – to be with me forever – in a stage where animosity and misunderstanding are no more and only right relationship will reside; where love alone is present. That’s the only heaven I can ever believe in wanting to know - when a parents love finally comes to fruition.

If only they could know.



Trawlers at Rest

(Photo by Melissa Jados)