

Touchdown

A football soars through the air,
turning, spinning on an unseen axis,
a slight wobble while staying on course.
Destined to land in the hands of a team member
who cradles it tightly
as he carries it past the goal line -
the moment punctuated by a leap of joy,
a spike of the ball,
a short, celebratory dance
and a moment of triumph shared with teammates
across the expansive field.

A leap of joy, a celebratory dance,
the best possible responses
to moments filled with so much hope and happiness.
Today, we share with Sophia and Dion
just such a moment,
the culmination of so many prior moments and choices
as they choose to love, to grow,
to face the uncertainty of the future,
its promises and its gifts,
its challenges and its bounty
together.

In 1995,
two special blessings arrived
on opposite sides of Chicagoland,
Dion and Sophia,
a sprawling metropolis between them.
One tossing and chasing a ball,
any ball.
The other singing and dancing,
swishing and swirling.

Dion, a big brother
a steady hand
to two rambunctious little brothers
and a light-hearted little sister
whose sparkling smile lights up a room.

Sophia, a little sister herself

the giggling, giddy sidekick
to her own steady big brother
who provided a calm, quiet background
as she skipped and chattered through her childhood.

They came together, Sophia and Dion,
on a college campus,
lingering glances, alleged study sessions,
long, serious talks, late nights at the Roost
and a fair bit of Reality TV
including, prophetically, The Perfect Match.
Cruising the still streets of Elmhurst Illinois
in a gleaming black mustang,
later while biking along the shores of Lake Michigan,
or over brunch in the homey, wood-toned rooms of the Golden Bear Diner
they merged words and dreams, found a future.

So, today, as we witness this promise to love,
this commitment to family,
this request for God's blessings,
Let us dance!
Let us leap for joy!
Let us swish and swirl!
Let us share in this dream
and in this new life
that Dion and Sophia are building
together.
What a wonderful, beautiful cause for celebration.

Mary Barbara Walsh