

For my eldest daughter, Delia, at her Wedding

26th March 2005

I kept it a secret – not even Mandy knew. When the minister asked, "*Who gives this woman to be married to this man?*" I rose from my seat, walked to the front, and recited this poem:

*Who gives her away?
That is quite a question you are asking, Sir
Neither answer to be lightly given
Give our precious treasure away?
Not on your life!!
Not unless it be t'ward the very purpose for which she
first was given.*

*You see, some 24 years ago
Into our arms was laid
A precious gift –
A tender little dove
But with a charge:
Carefully counsel, nurture and love
Mould and create – don't just leave to fate
Guide and protect this little bird
Until at last, sensing the magnetic pull of God's call on
her life
She'll rise, and with wings so strong, she'll fly a straight
course toward her destiny*

You said to give this little bird away?

*A beautiful flower bud, she was.
'Twas our joy and delight to watch this pretty little bud
filling out –
Each petal perfectly forming –
Growing
Until at last our delightful rose burst forth into full
bloom
Her splendour and sweet fragrance radiating the glory
of God
An absolute joy to behold.*

Did you say to give our little Rose away?

*'Twas a seemingly insignificant little white stone, placed
in our hands
Only as each facet was being cut did we start to realize
the value of this gem
A diamond, deliberately and carefully shaped by the
Master's hand
Suddenly held high, its lustre reflecting the brilliance of
God's light
Into a dark world; Lighting up little eyes*

Must I really give our precious diamond away?

*Ours was the charge
To shape and refine
This Dream – of God
Precariously placed in the care of frail human hands
To guide this Dove towards full flight
To nurture this Rose till full bloom
This Diamond to sparkle in the light
What an awesome task
But a joyous one!*

What is God's dream for you my child?

What, the future God has planned

And what are you taking on, my son

What will be your Canaan land?

My job's now done –

The race I've run,

And won

The batten I now pass to your hand

So take this beautiful bride of yours

*And give yourself for her completely – like Christ did for
us*

Constantly washing her with gentle words

That to Him, her you might present on that day

In full glory

For both of you, this is but the beginning,

A hope in the making

A dream about to unfold

A springboard

A platform from which God's purposes must be sprung

Your mission is now begun –

*And in bringing you to this place, the greater part of my
task is hereby ended*

My little Dove has set her course,

My beautiful Rose is in full bloom

My lovely Diamond is sparkling in the sun

His will has been done

*Therefore, Sir, with clear conscience I return to answer
your question,*

"Who gives this treasure away?

What shall my response be,

And what more can I say?

Is this the time, the person, the place?

Is it?

Yes! Yes! And Yes again!

Then, sir,

Thus my clear answer shall be:

"With unspeakable joy,

With absolute confidence, and

With our warmest blessings,

Sir,

My wife and I do.