

Marriage

Dearly Beloved -- because all attending, witnessing or participating in this joyous event are beloved,

We come together to celebrate the social, religious and legal union of two formidable individuals – and the creation of a new entity, their nuclear family.

They are now truly partners in life, publicly declaring their commitment to each other, creating a bond of love, companionship and mutual support that will enhance their lives and be a source of joy to themselves, their families and their friends.

In the eyes of the law, they have now assumed various legal rights and obligations; but in the everyday real world, they are creating a union whose goal is to increase their happiness.

The law does not speak of the importance of a compatible sense of humor, of a willingness to compromise, of an eagerness to meet each other's emotional and physical needs, of a commitment to care for and to protect each other.

It does not speak of the need to apply common sense and the need to go more than half way in resolving all questions that may arise, whether emotional or economic, social or professional, relating to family or to friends.

The law doesn't speak of the need for clear and continuing communication, by which each one's most important needs are made known and by which priorities are established –

in passion and in practicality, and in all those other spiritual and mundane aspects of life.

Marriage manuals say that the greatest single source of friction in marriage is – money. In my 50 years of marriage I personally have found a solution to all financial and most other questions – in a single magical incantation, uttered thoughtfully and with expression by either spouse.

It is, “Yes, dear,” and it really works!

A second source of possible conflict – a couple’s relations with family on both sides – can be resolved by a somewhat different magical formula: in all questions relating to the bride’s family, her choice should govern; in all questions relating to the groom’s family, his choice should govern.

The law also doesn’t speak of rituals of intimacy and connections, such as romantic dinners, expressions of affection, long walks and talks, the sharing of recreational interests, and, above all, the talk, talk, talk that brings and keeps people together.

The law doesn’t speak of another important aspect of life – the pre-existing network of friends, family and professional relationships that add so much to strengthen a relationship, and which should be cultivated consciously as “yours,” “mine” and “ours.”

How to spend leisure time and recreation is another topic that is so idiosyncratic and individual that it, too, deserves to be explored as “yours,” “mine” and “ours.”

And, finally, the law doesn’t speak of perhaps the most important aspects of marriage, which are friendship and mutual respect.

Friendship and respect are built on trust, on consideration, on emotional support, on an acceptance of each other's flaws, on the ability to provide good cheer in life's "down" moments, in the ability to extend graciously and sincerely compliments and – shall we say – “constructive suggestions.”

I have felt close to Peter for years and sense that with Jena, too, Joanna and I will delight in the glow of their warm and loving relationship.

Here, before us, are two attractive people, deeply in love, with so much going for them, not the least of which are shared high energy, imagination, an optimistic view of the world, and a universe of friends and family that love them and wish them well.

Let me close with a combination of prayer, hope and expectation.

Barack Obama recently described his wife as, “the smartest, toughest, funniest best friend I could ever hope for.”

May Jena and Peter be able to say the same years from now!!

Let us bless this husband and wife!

Amen.

Daniel Rose talks can be found on: www.danielrose.org