

Wedding Ceremony:
Kira Goetschius & Erskin Cherry
Saturday, October 18, 2010
6:00pm

Processional Locus Iste by Anton Bruckner - Choir

Welcome Tracy Joseph

Reading Sue Goetschius

From: The Irrational Season by Madeleine L'Engle

Homily Rev. Tracy Joseph

Reading Bob Spears

From: Instructions for Life in the New Millennium by

His Holiness the 14th Dali Lama

Vows

Exchange of Rings

Reading Rev. Tracy Joseph

Declaration of Marriage

Recessional

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Welcome

Today we have gathered here at the request of Kira and Erskin as they join their lives in marriage.

It is appropriate that you, their family and friends, be here to witness their wedding, because the ideals, the understanding, and the mutual respect that they bring to their marriage have their roots in the love, friendship, and guidance that you have given them.

Khoren Arisian says that marriage, in short, not only celebrates community, but, by definition, creates it anew.

Gathered here today, we constitute a unique and diverse community. However, one single thread runs through our personal relationships with Erskin and Kira. Each of you holds a special place in their hearts, and for this reason, they have chosen to ask each of you here to share in this joyous occasion.

To their delight, you have accepted the offer to celebrate with them.

Reading

Kira's aunt, Sue Goetschius, will now share with us a reading from one of Kira's favorite authors.

Sue:

From: The Irrational Season by Madeleine L'Engle

Ultimately there comes a moment when a decision must be made. Ultimately two people who love each other must ask themselves how much they hope for as their love grows and deepens, and how much risk they are willing to take...It is indeed a fearful gamble...Because it is the nature of love to create, a marriage itself is something which has to be created, so that, together we become a new creature.

To marry is the biggest risk in human relations that a person can take...If we commit ourselves to one person for life this is not, as many people think, a rejection of freedom; rather it demands the courage to move into all the risks of freedom, and the risk of love which is permanent; into that love which is not possession, but participation...It takes a lifetime to learn another person...When love is not possession, but participation, then it is part of that co-creation which is our human calling...

Homily

Rev. Tracy Joseph

Kira – Erskin, We are here today to celebrate your commitment to the love that unites you. Not as an end of your engagement, because you will always engage with one another. And not as a beginning of your commitment, because you have already proven your dedication. We are here to formally establish, and celebrate, your mutual promise of trust, love, and support.

Speak of marriage, Massachusetts Supreme Court Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall said the following:

Marriage is a vital social institution.

The exclusive commitment of two individuals to each other nurtures love and mutual support; it brings stability to our society.

For those who choose to marry, and for their children, marriage provides an abundance of legal, financial, and social benefits.

In return it imposes weighty legal, financial, and social obligations.... Without question, marriage enhances the welfare of the community.

It is a social institution of the highest importance.

Marriage is at once a deeply personal commitment to another human being and a highly public celebration of the ideals of mutuality, companionship, intimacy, fidelity, and family....

Because it fulfills yearnings for security, safe haven, and connection that express our common humanity, civil marriage is an esteemed institution and the decision whether and whom to marry is among life's momentous acts of self-definition....

This decision is one that the two of you have already made. Over the past seven years you have proven not only your desire to be together, but also your dedication to each other in spite of any difficulties along the way.

You made this commitment early on, when you met in Hawaii at a local folk dance. This was clear not just to you, but to those around you as well. Kira, when Erskin gave you a reason to pick up your violin again, your aunt Sue immediately predicted this day would come.

Erskin, your dear friend Marcella could easily argue she knew we would be here today, ever since that late night in the parking lot of the Navy exchange, when you simply had to show Kira the helium balloon vending machine, and offered to buy her a balloon in every color.

It hasn't always been easy. You've stuck by each other through five states, and even more career changes. You've lived together in a tiny town with a goat for a neighbor and a washing machine that flooded the shop downstairs with every other load. You've lived with your parents, and with each other's parents, and are still on speaking terms with all of them. You've lived hundreds of miles apart – Kira sharing a room with a bulimic cat that wasn't even hers, and Erskin saying goodbye to dreams of one career while unknowingly saying goodbye to a friend for the last time.

But even when you didn't know how to move forward together, you never thought to move apart. You stood beside each other, even when Kira couldn't stand. And as you stand before me now, we can all see the strength of your decision to marry.

From small choices – sharing a cell phone bill to save money – to serious responsibilities – adopting two abandoned cats from the local shelter – your lives have already become entwined.

Erskin, in Kira you've found your best friend, truest confidant, most prized critic, and most steadfast supporter. While Kira, Erskin has become someone to share your passions and ideals with, big and small. From making the world a better place, to straightening the painting on the wall of the hotel room.

It is for all these reasons and more, you have asked us here to witness you join your lives in marriage.

Remember, however, that your lives are not just within you, but within the context of your community. Therefore, as you unite together, so, too, do you unite all those connected to you through love and friendship. This union does not come at the expense of your existing connections. Rather, it is a new foundation – a source of strength that allows you to grow both as a couple, and in all your relationships.

Reading

Bob Spears, a lifelong friend of Erskin and Kira, will now share with us one of Erskin's favorite passages:

Bob:

*From: Instructions for Life in the New Millennium by
His Holiness the 14th Dali Lama*

*Take into account that great love
and great achievements involve great risk.
And that a loving atmosphere in your home
is the foundation for your life.
Be gentle with the earth, be gentle with one another.
When disagreements come remember always
to protect the spirit of your union.
When you realize you've made a mistake,
take immediate steps to correct it.
Remember that the best relationship is one
in which your love for each other
exceeds your need for each other.
So love yourselves, love one another,
love all that is your life together and all else will follow.*

Vows

Communication is the basis of all relationships. While a definition of marriage from others can guide you, it is the vows you make to each other that define your marriage.

I ask that you make these promises to one another now.

(Prompt only as necessary, sharing your book for Kira and Erskin to read.)

Erskin:

I choose you, Kira, to be my wife.

Through laughter and tears, in plenty and in want,

*I promise to create a home of warmth and peace with you,
which celebrates laughter, friendship and compassion.*

I will strive to be slow to anger and quick to forgive.

*I will respect you as an individual, a partner, and an equal,
knowing that we do not complete, but complement each other.*

*I will strive to live consciously and deliberately so that our
lives will be rich and that we might make a difference in this
world;*

*I promise to continue to love you faithfully, as it is your heart
that moves me, and your mind that inspires me.*

*I promise to celebrate your imagination and your intellect, to
never stop creating, with you or for you, and to support and
inspire you in your creativity.*

Kira:

And I choose you, Erskin, to be my husband.

Through laughter and tears, in plenty and in want,

*I promise to create a home of warmth and peace with you,
which celebrates laughter, friendship and compassion.*

I will strive to be slow to anger and quick to forgive.

*I will respect you as an individual, a partner, and an equal,
knowing that we do not complete, but complement each other.*

*I will strive to live consciously and deliberately so that our
lives will be rich and that we might make a difference in this
world;*

*I promise to continue to love you faithfully, as it is your heart
that moves me, and your mind that inspires me.*

*I promise to celebrate your imagination and your intellect, to
never stop creating, with you or for you, and to support and
inspire you in your creativity.*

Erskin:

From this day forward, you and I are family.

Kira:

From this day forward, you and I are family.

Exchange of Rings

(Kat Cherry (Erskin's sister) will have Kira's ring.

Elissa Goetschius (Kira's sister) will have Erskin's ring.)

Wedding rings can be made from many materials. Some are made from yellow gold, some white. Others are platinum, titanium, or even wood. Some are adorned with precious gems. Some are but simple bands.

But *all* wedding rings are *created*. Metals are mined from the ground, refined, and molded. Wood must grow from a sapling, then be cut and carved. Gems, once pulled from earth, must also be cut. All these materials must be shaped and sized before they can ever be worn.

It is this effort that turns raw materials into something valuable. But it is your wearing of these rings that will make them precious.

These rings have no end, and so, are eternal. Yet all rings have a beginning in their creation. Your rings are symbols in both these ways – as what you are creating together begins here, today, but, once forged, lasts an eternity.

May we have the rings, please.

(Prompt only as necessary, sharing your book for Kira and Erskin to read.)

Kira, while placing the ring on Erskin's finger:

All that I am, I share with you
From this day forward

Erskin, while placing the ring on Kira's finger:

All that I am, I share with you
From this day forward

The Hands of your Spouse:

Please join hands.

These are the hands of your best friend as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow, and forever.

These are the hands that will work alongside yours, as together you build your future.

These are the hands that will love, cherish, and comfort you through the years.

These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief fills your mind and will wipe tears from your eyes, both of sorrow and of joy.

These are the hands that will give you strength when you most need it.

These are the hands that – even when wrinkled and aged – will still be reaching for yours.

Reading Rev. Tracy Joseph
Old English / Irish Blessing

May your joys be as bright as the morning,
Your years of happiness as numerous as the stars in the
heavens,
and your troubles but shadows that fade in the sunlight of love.

Declaration of Marriage

Kira and Erskin, You have come willingly and joyfully here today. And in front of your family and friends you have exchanged promises which bind you to each other in marriage. You have exchanged rings as a symbol of those promises and of your unending love.

Therefore, by the authority vested in me by the state of Maryland, it is my pleasure to pronounce you:

Husband and Wife!!

Recessional