
Opening

Please be seated. Welcome family and friends. We are gathered here today to witness and celebrate the marriage of Groom and Bride. We are not here to mark the start of a relationship however; we are here to recognize a bond that already exists. Groom and Bride have spent the last four years together, so we have come together to bear witness to the bond that has grown between them. Today, they will affirm this bond formally and publicly. But this affirmation of love would be empty if they could not share it with their most beloved friends and family members. Groom and Bride hope that they can mark their transition to husband and wife not only by celebrating the love between themselves, but by also celebrating the love between all of us—including the love of their parents, siblings, extended family, and best friends. Without that love, today would be far less joyous. Thank you all for being here.

I have also been asked by Groom and Bride to thank their parents, for the wonderful lives they have given them, for the hard work and guidance they have provided, and for their everlasting love, support, and encouragement. It is from them that they have learned the true meaning of love, friendship and family.

Introduction

What a truly special day today is! Only rarely do any of us take the time to travel far away to meet all of our closest friends and family for the sole purpose of celebrating.

When you are in love, you get to grab a piece of love's transcendence and take it with you in your daily life. You don't have to travel to the top of a mountain or a far away land to feel something important; you can feel that same beauty and enormity within your own heart. And that is really why we are here today. Because love is enormous, and to

take even a tiny piece into yourself and be able to experience and understand it is the greatest gift in the world.

Today, we take the time to celebrate sublime moments in our lives so to remember just how important love is to all of us. When we were children, it was easy to see magic in the world; now we need days like this to remind us.

Charge to the Couple *couples story...this is an example.*

Groom and Bride, for the past (number) years, you have built a strong foundation for your relationship based on honesty and respect. You have found joy in one another's company, and you have become better, more fulfilled people because of your connection. You have been able to stay together through the varied challenges of jobs, distance from family, and changing friendships, because of your shared values, humor, history, and unconditional love for one another. As long as you maintain these qualities, you will have a long and successful marriage.

However, when a relationship matures, it is natural to become complacent. It is important to remember not to take your partner for granted or to neglect your relationship because your relationship so far has been easy. Instead, give priority to the tenderness, gentleness, and kindness that you each deserve. Remember to write love notes, give each other massages, and kiss in the rain. Take time for just each other. Share your passions, and discover life's deeper questions. Pursue new experiences, grow together, and most importantly, laugh often. There will be difficulties ahead, but if you face them as a couple, with a strong sense of love, perspective, and mutual support, you will not only survive, but thrive.

A brief moment in time and the stroke of a pen are all that is required to create the legal bond of marriage, but it takes a lifetime of love,

commitment, and laughter to make a marriage durable and eternal. The process of marriage does not begin or end today; it is a lifelong pursuit. Your relationship already has all of the necessary components for success, but you must to maintain that from here forward by remembering what is important in your relationship and why you are making this commitment to one another today. Groom and Bride, as long as you are both respectful of each other, you will make it through the numerous changes and chapters that your lives will take. As long as you honor the promises that you will make to each other today, you will create a life of love and happiness.

These hands that you hold on this your wedding day are the hands of your best friend, these are hands that can touch your heart like no other. And when they are old and wrinkled they will say with just a simple touch, "I love you....I am here for you....and you make me so very happy!" May your hands always be held by one another. May your hearts forever be each other's home and your arm's each other's shelter.

In a few moments you will say a few words that will take you across a threshold of life creating a sacred contract between each other witnessed by your family and friends (and God). These promises are infinite in nature.

Understanding the sacredness (seriousness) of the promises you are about to make and the responsibilities and obligations that they include are you now prepared to make your promises to each other?

Vows (these are samples, can be however you wish)

Groom do you take Bride to be your wife, to promise to encourage and inspire her, to laugh with her, and to comfort her in times of sorrow and struggle. to promise to love her in good times and in bad, when your love is simple, and when it is an effort. Do you promise to cherish her, and to always hold her in highest regard.

Do you promise these things today, and all the days of your life?

I DO!

Bride do you take Groom to be your husband, to promise to encourage and inspire him, to laugh with him, and to comfort him in times of sorrow and struggle. to promise to love him in good times and in bad, when your love is simple, and when it is an effort. Do you promise to cherish him, and to always hold him in highest regard.

Do you promise these things today, and all the days of your life?

I DO!

Rings

Then it is time to exchange rings. Wedding rings are a tangible symbol of the vows that you have just made to each other. Wear them every day to remind yourselves of the promises that you have made. In addition, realize that when you place the wedding rings on each other's fingers, you are releasing the past, bringing only those memories, desires, and hopes which will bring support to each other into your future life together.

Please join left hands.

Groom/Bride, please repeat after me. Bride/Groom, with this ring I thee wed. May it always remind you of my love, today, tomorrow and forever.

May your marriage bring you all the exquisite excitements a marriage should bring, and may life grant you also patience, tolerance, and understanding.

May you always need one another - not so much to fill your emptiness as to help you to know your fullness.

May you need one another, but not out of weakness.

May you want one another, but not out of lack.

May you entice, but not compel one another.

May you embrace, but not encircle one another.

May you succeed in all important ways with one another, and not fail in the little graces.

May you look for things to praise, often say, "I love you!" and take no notice of small faults.

If you have quarrels that push you apart, may both of you hope to have good sense enough to take the first step back.

May you enter into the mystery which is the awareness of one another's presence - no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side by side, and warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even distant cities.

May you have happiness, and may you find it making one another happy.

May you have love, and may you find it loving one another.

Groom and Bride, you have expressed your love to one another through the commitment and promises you have just made. With the best wishes of all of us here, by the laws of the State of (Oregon, Washington) I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may now kiss the bride.

Family and friends, I present to you for the very first time Mr. and Mrs. (name)