

Wedding Ceremony for Katie & Nick

October 12, 2012 • 6:30pm

PROCESSIONAL, with music

WELCOME

Welcome dear parents and all of you gathered here in this spectacular place. It is made more special tonight by its purpose – to house the wedding of our dear Katie and Nick.

I am Reverend Lynn Gladstone and I am deeply pleased to have been invited to perform these marriage rites for Katie and Nick, who I have come to know as a sincere-to-the-core couple. As we contemplate their life together, let us each take a moment to invoke the Universal Spirit of Love that unites all of our beliefs and ask that it please take notice of this beloved pair. May it bestow loving consideration upon them always and protect them with kind benevolence.

I continue this invocation with an old Irish wedding blessing.

“Longtime Sun”

Celtic instrumental music plays

May the longtime sun shine on you
All love surround you
And the pure light within you
Guide you on your way
Akal, Akal, infinity....
Akal, Akal, no end

Why are we here? Katie and Nick have told me that they want this sacred moment to be a celebration of their love, *with* loved ones, you – their family and friends. They expressed how lucky they are to have family as their friends and friends as their family. You are the people that they can count on.

They also want us to remember, and thereby honor, those relatives who can be here only in spirit tonight: Nick’s father, Jacques, and his grandparents, Rhoda and Arthur. We bring to mind Katie’s grandparents, Mary, Thomas, Mildred and Gustav, and all who came before them. Allow us to believe that they are somewhere around here, blessing you now.

We are very fortunate to have the colorful influences of the Irish, Jewish and French cultures among your families as they offer us a rich interfaith set of traditions, some of which we will experience in this ceremony.

By being here tonight as guests and witnesses it is clear that your love for this couple is present in your hearts. A newly married couple benefits from the support of their family and friends. Together, you make up the circle of caring that will help them embark on a life of meaning together.

Let us now take in this incredible *chuppah* – the Jewish wedding canopy that was entirely created for this bride and groom by Nick’s stepfather. This gift comes from a heart that runs deep and is truly a labor of sincere love and respect for this pair. I have been told that this *chuppah* has been specially designed as an heirloom, to be passed down *l’dor va’dor* – from generation to generation. Tonight we begin this tradition by having two families united inside its perimeter. When you get a chance, I recommend taking a closer look at the remarkably crafted details.

Katie and Nick: the *chuppah* represents your home. Its open sides suggest that the doors of your home shall always be open, as may your hearts be, to welcome all who wish to enter. May the openness allow the sunshine in and the roof provide you shelter from the rain.

PRESENTATION

At this time, I ask Katie’s cousin, Lisa, to come forward to bless Katie and Nick by presenting a poem:

“For Marriage”

by poet-philosopher John O’Donohue

Excerpt:

As spring unfold the dream of the earth,
May you bring each other’s heart to birth.

As surprised as the silence that music opens,
May your words for each other be touched with reverence.

And as twilight harvests the day’s colors,
May love bring you home to each other.

ABOUT KATIE AND NICK

So here we are, magnificently gathered in joy, because in 2009 two young people, young actors, met on the way to plying their talents on tour in *A Christmas Carol*. Though they both had pledged to not date any more actors, something went wonderfully awry with that plan. Then, of course, there was the help of Facebook communication. Prior to the Christmas Carol tour, in their own words, Nick, “with the adorable dimples,” cashing in on perks from his day job, wined and dined “the stunning gal in the beautiful purple dress.” By the time they began the tour in Omaha they had come to know and like a lot about one another and became pretty much inseparable.

The genuineness of these two sound souls trumped the make believe roles that they were playing on stage. In Nebraska they were able to discern the reality of each other: without the costumes, makeup and glittering lights, who they profoundly are inside.

Nick and Katie’s engagement was actually a marriage of stage life and real life. Most of us may know about the dramatic and most powerful way their proposal took place – onstage, as Nick said, “Life imitating art,” mimicking their roles of John Brooke and Meg March in *Little Women*! I hope your life together continues to be full of creative surprises for one another.

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNITY

Would Jeff, Nick's godfather, please come up to present this couple with a poem:

"i carry your heart"

by e.e.cummings

Excerpt:

i fear no fate(for you are my fate,my sweet)i want
no world(for beautiful you are my world,my true)
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)

Mike, please come forward to lead us in a song. Mike will lead in with the song and then we'd like everyone to join in with the chorus. You will find the lyrics in your program.

"Give Yourself to Love"

by Kate Wolf

Chorus:

You must give yourself to love if love is what you're after;
Open up your hearts to the tears and laughter,
And give yourself to love, give yourself to love.

VOWS

I understand that you two have something to say to one another.

Katie and Nick share the vows they wrote for one another.

Please repeat after me:

שלי אהובי והוא שלי לדודי אני

Ani-le-dodi, Veh-dodi-li.

What was just said in Hebrew is, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine." They are the same words embroidered into the *chuppah*.

You have just spoken beautiful vows and I recommend that you make opportunities to repeat them to one another, over and over, throughout your lives together.

ABOUT MARRIAGE

Where does a good marriage begin? It takes two people who can laugh and cry and sing, dance and be quiet together; who can talk, make plans, dream of the future, respect and be respected. They are willing to be vulnerable and sometimes disagree, but have a commitment strategy for resolution. And perhaps most important amid their unquestioning love as a twosome, recognizing that surrounding their devoted friendship each individual must forge their own path while the other plays their cheerleader.

Nick and Katie have shared many good times and they have motivated each other to excellence. There have been clearly challenging times, too. Our first notion might be to feel bad about that. But in my estimation, it is the measure of a relationship's strength when it survives the difficult moments, as theirs has. Since Katie and Nick began as a couple, they have been each other's support system without either ever having to ask.

That's just how it is when love lives large, as it clearly does with our bride and groom. As a realist I might add, though, sometimes we do need to ask for help and that's really okay and even desirable.

I asked Katie what she thought marriage is about. These are her words: "A partnership/spending a life together in love and friendship, marked by honesty, loyalty, and trustworthiness."

I asked Nick what Katie means to him. His answer: "My eternal plus 1."

I asked them both what they admired about the other: "Big heart, patience, sense of humor, cooking ability." (Nick especially admired this in Katie.)

I asked them what they liked about being a couple: "Great collaboration; we're a good team and the ability to deal with ups and downs."

You will do well together.

WINE RITUAL

Many cultures incorporate a wine ritual into their weddings. In this ritual, Nick and Katie will share from one vessel of wine – a family Kiddush cup. This is a traditional way of sharing their love and the joy that comes from the fruit of the vine. In doing this they are also displaying to you, their dearest loved ones, their commitment to the sanctity of this marriage.

From the Hebrew, we bless the wine. Katie and Nick and whoever wishes to, please join me with this prayer over the wine:

אמן (הגפן פרי בורא העולם מלך אלוהינו ה' אתה ברוך)
Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-aolum borei pri hagafen.
Amen

Blessed are you, Adonai, creator of the fruit of the vine.
Nick sips, passes it to Katie, she sips and hands it back to Lynn.

And now, translated from a French wedding toast: "Let's toast to the health of the bride and groom; we wish you much happiness and good humor. May your love endure always!"

And everyone, please raise your virtual glasses and say, "A votre santé!" To your health!

Nick and Katie, here are some of my words of advice:

Find ways and time to cherish one another.
Practice respect and kindness.
Be honest with yourself and with your other.
Know that words can hurt, so use them wisely and gently.
Remember to step into each other's shoes.
Be willing to apologize and to forgive.
And always try to make your moves from that depth of love you feel today.

Remember, there is now a joining of two families and you will have choices to make. Try to be fair. When you make choices from your own inner wisdom and from your heart, you will make the best decisions. As well, the two of you and your created family will need to come first before you can give wholly to others.

And please ponder this, that when you look into each other's eyes, you are looking into the eyes of a force that connects all of humanity.

INTENTION AND RINGS

The time has come. Please face each other as I ask this most important legal question to each of you.

Do you Katie come here tonight to be wed to Nick of your own free will?
I do

Do you Nick come here tonight to be wed to Katie of your own free will?
I do

Well, now that that is settled, Ari, may we have the rings?

Nick, please place the ring on Katie's left hand. *He does.*

Katie, please place the ring on Nick's left hand. *She does.*

PRONOUNCEMENT

With the power vested in me by the state of New York and the power of your love, I now pronounce you husband and wife.

It's KISS time!
They kiss.

My hands on them:

יְבָרַךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְיִשְׂמְרֵנוּ
Ye vah recha Adonai Ve yish me recha.

May God bless you and keep you.

Lynn Gladstone
INTERFAITH REVEREND, MSW

GLASS RITUAL AND BLESSING

The conclusion of this ceremony is marked by a Jewish tradition: the breaking of a glass by groom and bride. One of many explanations for this ritual is that the shattering brings to mind the fragility of human relationships and reminds us that even the strongest love can be subject to frailty, thus requiring the utmost care.

As we congregate to share the meaning of this most heartfelt occasion, let me ask you all to take a brief moment to go within and fill yourselves with the best of wishes for this lovely couple as they walk into the light of their future together.

*Place wrapped glass on floor between them.
They step on the glass. CRUNCH!
All yell, "Mazel tov! Congratulations!"*

RECESSIONAL, with music