

## Homily for the Wedding of Jenny Hemmenson and Brandon Webb

Jenny and Brandon:

If I were to ask the married couples in this assembly “who married you?” Most would give me the name of a priest, or minister or perhaps a justice of the peace.

The Church’s understanding however is that you confer marriage upon one another. The minister stands only as a witness to attest to the validity of what you offer, what you freely give.... to one another.

In preparation for today, you have had a period of instruction where you had the opportunity to learn a little more about each other and the expectations of marriage. And in only a few moments, you will be married.

You will be fundamentally different from what you were when you walked in this afternoon. As the Gospel reminds us, you will longer be two, but one. This is a great mystery that unfolds over time.

In the second reading, St. Paul tells us that you are about to go back to school where you are both student and teacher in the subjects of genuine marital love!

Everything you have learned so far, while important, has been in preparation for what is to follow.

You will be re-taking some classes like:

Patience.....kindness.....generosity.....endurance and self denial.

You will be enrolled in **advanced courses in forgiveness and acceptance**. There will be Master’s level classes in putting the other first in all things.

**This is not easy**. And the truth is, you never actually graduate or get a **diploma this side of Heaven**.

A little earlier, I mentioned that you confer marriage upon one another. This is proclaimed today in front all of these witnesses and before Christ.

Therefore, your marriage is a Christian vocation.

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This vocation seeks two things of you:

1. That you ALLOW Jesus to be an active person in your union.
2. That you make a DAILY commitment to confer marriage upon one another because your love is a **choice** that must be freely willed and desired and renewed.
  - a. There will be days when you don't "feel like it". It's a part of being human.
    - i. But remember, we do a whole list of things every day that we don't "feel" like doing.
    - ii. Contrary to what our culture tells us, love is not a feeling, though it certainly evokes emotions. Love is an **action**.

Here is the good news:

Jesus Christ, by nature, IS LOVE and therefore He IS all that St. Paul describes as love. And while your friends and family will always have advice, only He is uniquely and singularly able to instruct and guide you in all that love is.

He **desires** to be your companion on this journey.

It is His Divine **pleasure** to **lavish** upon you all of the **graces** that you need in this task of **continually becoming one flesh**.

He **longs** to help you to remain faithful to one another as you live out your vows.

But He requires something of you. He gave you free will, so that you may accept or deny Him a place in your marriage, in your home, in your parenting, in your jobs.

As you begin in a special and sacred way your new life together, there are really only two questions vital to your success:

How will you respond to Jesus?

How will you respond to one another?