

When Katie introduced me to Dan, I thought I'd better be honest with him right away. "The pressure is on, Dan," I said. Katie's 3 married siblings have chosen outstanding spouses. They've set the in-law bar very high. Well, I didn't have to worry. Katie is probably the most meticulous of all the Turners. Her life is well-organized, and she can organize yours as well. She can set a goal, think ahead, and take the steps that lead there. She wouldn't marry just anyone; she would find the right husband. Tim said last night how happy the McKernans were to add Katie to the family; well, the Turners all feel the same way about Dan.

This couple understands the importance of what they are about to do. At weddings it's very easy to get lost in the show of it all. We judge weddings by how well everyone dressed and how good the food was. For Katie and Dan, this wedding is about much more than those externals. It's about life; it's about family; it's about love; and it's about faith.

Still, it's hard to get away from food and clothes. Even the bible judges the first Christians on these same externals. The disciples did not always get along. Saint Paul tells the Colossians you have to bear with one another and forgive one another. If someone has a grievance against you, you have to forgive that person just as the Lord has forgiven you. Paul compares Christian virtues to clothing. When you get up, these are the clothes you put on: "heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience." Imagine yourself dressed that way, Paul says. Then as if you are tying on an overcoat, he says, "over all these put on love." On a wedding day you want to look right. But in marriage, it's the virtue you wear that matters most; when people see you, they should not just see how you look, but how you are. That makes a good Christian.

Christians also have a thing about food. According to the gospels, when Jesus arrived somewhere, he frequently showed up at dinnertime. This reached a climax at the Last Supper when he handed over his body and blood to his disciples as food and drink. After the resurrection, he was still preoccupied with food. He appeared to his disciples on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias. They score a miraculous catch of fish, and when they haul it ashore, what is Jesus doing? Fixing breakfast. Fish on the grill and bread. Then, very much as he did with the bread and wine at the Last Supper, "Jesus took the bread and gave it to them, and in like manner the fish." The followers of Jesus still eat and drink in his memory. Especially on a wedding day it's important to remember what Jesus did with bread. He took it, thanked God for it, broke it, and gave it. He expects the same from us in the way we handle life. We receive our life, thank God for it, we organize our time, and we give it to others. Life is ours to be enjoyed, but more importantly, life is ours to be shared.

Katie and Dan, you've come here so that Christ may clothe you with love and feed you with his body and blood. He expects you to do for others what he is doing for you. Take love, give thanks for love, increase your love, and give your love. Make Christ proud to have both of you as members of his family.