

## Carlo Santos and Lindsey Lopez

Carlo and Lindsey have been preparing this day for a long time. They have known each other for over a decade. They approached their wedding methodically, not entering this union until they had reached certain personal milestones. They pursued jobs and pastimes that are not just enjoyable for themselves, but that enrich the lives of others. They embrace activities that develop other people physically, mentally and spiritually.

Just when everything seemed planned out, the pandemic hit, but it did not deter the two of them from coming to this day. From the moment we were anticipating this wedding here at the cathedral, we knew the dangers of the virus. But Carlo and Lindsey approached this day with grace. They possess a gentle spirit together. Their lives thus far have prepared them for their life to come, balanced across the threshold of a pandemic wedding.

They chose appropriate scripture readings for their wedding Mass. The Book of Tobit is a novel, and in the middle come these verses that show how another couple brought grace to a moment of danger. Tobit had been struck blind in an accident at home. He sent his son Tobiah to their relative Raguel for assistance. Tobiah recruited a guide, whom he called Azariah, not knowing he had just hired the archangel Raphael in disguise to guide his journey. The reading we heard today describes what happens when the travelers arrive at the relative's house. Young Tobiah conveys friendly greetings and the sad news of his father's blindness. Then he sees Raguel's daughter Sarah, and he is smitten. He cues his guide to ask Raguel for permission to marry her. Raguel overhears the request and immediately says yes. But he feels compelled to warn the young man about a certain danger he is facing. He's not the first one to marry Sarah. Seven men have already married her, and all seven of them mysteriously died on the wedding night. Tobiah doesn't care. He's in love. Sarah comes in. Her mother brings out a scroll. Her father signs the contract. They affix their seals. They eat and drink.

These verses don't tell you the rest of the story. I won't spoil it for you, but it's a happy ending for all the characters. This passage is especially appropriate for this wedding today because both couples—Tobiah and Sarah, and Carlo and Lindsey—both couples get married while they are facing life-threatening circumstances: mysterious forces that they cannot control alone. But love is stronger than death. "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails."

St. Paul's description of love accurately puts words to a feeling that most of us have with special people in our lives. When Jesus described ideal disciples, he singled out the poor in spirit, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the clean of heart, and peacemakers. If we become like that, we will not just be happy, we will be blessed. You can be happy if you love a little, but you are blessed when you love a lot.

Carlo and Lindsey, we rejoice with you today that God has given you the priceless gift of love. We admire your determination to let love rule over any danger. We cannot plan for every emergency that comes in life, but we can live in a way that makes us ready. The best preparation is love.

Saturday, March 27, 2021