

David Girardi & Kristen Geissinger

David and Kristen were the first engaged couple I visited online once the lockdown happened in March of 2020. Like all of you I was accustomed to doing much of my work in person, and I didn't know how this was going to work out. But they were delightful, cooperative, excited, optimistic, and personable in a way that made the distance disappear. They taught me in one conversation there was another way I could do my work under difficult circumstances. Kristen had already been preparing to join the Catholic Church. She was ready for that step last spring and hoped to take this step, her wedding day, this spring. Last spring, we couldn't put many people in the cathedral at one time. That was disappointing, but the Sunday we received Kristen was a day that Bishop Johnston had canceled his other appointments due to the pandemic. So he happened to be here, and he did something else a bishop should do and welcomed a new member into our church. He learned there was another way he could do his work under difficult circumstances. This spring, plans for a wedding were put off, but by patience, planning and determination, even when we couldn't completely imagine how to make a wedding work under difficult circumstances, here we are. We found a way.

When you consider all that David and Kristen have gone through, putting this wedding together is a little like, well, like assembling a jigsaw puzzle. They were born in opposite corners of the world. They went to schools in two different states. And yet the two of them met in the simplest way possible: inside the building where they both happened to rent apartments. They were neighbors.

I guess you could say that's how Adam and Eve met: They were neighbors. However, in today's first reading Adam sees something more in Eve, something worth keeping together forever. Jesus referred to this passage in the gospel we heard today. He used it to show that because God created us in such a way that two could become one flesh, no one should separate what God has joined. In a faithful married couple, God himself snaps together the pieces of the puzzle.

David and Kristen are both individuals of great faith who possess strong values that they share with each other and with those who come to meet them. Their values have had an impact in their choice of friends and the commitments they make. Even the jobs they've had—strengthening the human body and clothing the human body—show their determination to help other people bolster self-confidence.

Kristen and David, you worked on this wedding day under difficult circumstances. The worst of the pandemic appears to be behind us, and the day you've dreamed has become real. Every married couple will tell you that you'll face new difficult circumstances in the years ahead, but they will remind you what you already know, that you can find a way forward with love. St. Paul says love "bears all things, believes all things, endures all things, hopes all things. Love never fails." That is the nature of true love, and the nature of God's love for you. You begin married life with this self-confidence: God has strengthened you, God has clothed you in love. Through it you will together show others the way.

Friday, June 25, 2021