

Arranging a wedding is always a challenge for a couple, but arranging one from out of State presents its own unique circumstances. Grant and Kiersten relied on the help of their families and friends to bring this day about, so everyone feels some sense of accomplishment in our gathering today.

Kiersten and Grant are no strangers to challenges. They persevered through years of school. They relocated for jobs. They have dealt with illness, and they have suffered the loss of people who were very close to them. Our faith reassures us that the souls of the faithful departed, especially those who have guided us on our pathway to life, join us in praising God today.

The scripture readings that Grant and Kiersten asked us to hear at their wedding explore the mystery of joy that follows perseverance. From the Song of Songs we hear of an innocent couple playing hide and seek to appreciate better the joy of being together. St. Paul's famous hymn about love focuses not just on its rewards but on its demands. Yes, everyone loves to be in love, but not everyone loves to work at love. Paul knew that genuine love results from perseverance and commitment.

The gospel explores this theme in greater detail. It considers two individuals building houses. They apparently follow the same floor plan—rooms arranged where they best benefit the inhabitants. But the builders thought differently about the foundation upon which they placed their floor. Each house faced the same adversities—rain, floods and wind. But because of the distinct foundations, the houses responded differently. You can hear an echo of the values St. Paul expressed: not just being in a house but building the house correctly; not just being in love, but building love correctly.

Grant and Kiersten are getting married at a time in history when people face adversities around the world and at home: a pandemic, a war, a reckoning on the value of human life, the defense of human rights. Our entire society together faces metaphorical rain, floods and wind. Some of our homes will stand; some will not. The foundation of society is the family. Families built on rock will withstand the challenges that families built on sand will not.

To arrange a wedding from out of State, Kiersten and Grant relied upon the sure, rock-solid foundation of family and friends who guided them toward this day. Now they join other families who lay a foundation for a just society in cities, states and countries around the world.

In Jesus' parable, the foundation he speaks about is his word. "Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock."

Grant and Kiersten, you have come this far because you listened to the words of Christ, and you acted on them in love for each other. Christ now invites you as a couple to listen and act on his words. Your gift of love will help others overcome the adversities of life and rejoice.