

Paul Black & Katie Evans

Paul and Katie have been dating each other for, what, six years now? So this is one of those weddings where people go, “Finally!” And their parents all knew one another even before Paul and Katie did.

But these years have been eventful. Both studied and entered fields of medicine while a pandemic spread around them and us. Now they enter another eventful year with new residency, new family, new city, new job. With so much going on, this day—with all that it promises—is the product of a great deal of thought and planning, not just by Paul and Katie, but by all of you. They are excited that you have come, happy that you took the effort to travel here. Their joy in you shows the social dimension of what two people do when they marry: They interact not only with each other in a new way, but also with the rest of their families and friends.

Both Paul and Katie share a strong faith in Christ, and their wedding day comes just a week after our Church celebrates Easter. On this day we reflect on the mystery of everlasting life that Christ promises those who follow him.

The resurrection made a tremendous impact on the first Christians, as we hear in tonight’s first reading. They devoted themselves to four activities: studying the teaching of the apostles, living in common, breaking bread, and praying. They held things in common; they even sold their property and possessions so that everyone could share assets together. They spent time in the temple area and shared meals at home. If this sounds a little like family life, you’re right. We sometimes call the family the domestic church, an idealized community where people share things in common, live together, study, break bread and pray. This social dimension exists both outside and inside the home.

According to Acts of the Apostles, when the first Christians lived this way, they also performed many signs and wonders. “Awe came upon everyone.” And “the Lord added to their number.” Staying faithful to a plan of community life, they also witnessed miracles. So, “they ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people.” These first Christians showed us how to live in communion with one another.

Paul and Katie have a great head start on their marriage because of all of you. You have demonstrated your love for one another, you have shared things in common, you have studied matters important to you and to society, you have shared meals together, and you arranged your time and resources to come together into this cathedral for this day of celebration and prayer.

Paul and Katie, you spent many years getting ready for this, and you begin married life on the octave day of the resurrection, when those awaiting the coming of the Messiah also shouted, “Finally!” Those first disciples immediately formed a community so that they could put their faith and love into action. Now you do the same. Their fourfold model is of great value for every Christian community and for every Christian household: Devote yourselves to teaching, communal life, the breaking of bread, and prayers. If you spend time at your local church and in your home, you too will witness signs and wonders, miracles you never expected because you have made your home a dwelling place for Christ.

Saturday, April 15, 2023