

# Celebrating a dozen years of marriage

Twelve years ago I stood in the narthex of the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, wearing my white gown, impatient and excited for the day—and this new chapter of life—to begin.

My father was there, and my bridesmaids—sisters and friends—along with a lovely flower girl and a handsome little ring bearer. There must have been other people milling around too, but that's a little fuzzy for me.

But I remember that walk up the aisle. And I recall laughing with my father the whole way until we reached the front where John looked so, so happy.

We couldn't wait to get married.



I'm not sure anyone ever knows what to expect of marriage, the joys and sadness you will face together. I never could have imagined the journey we would take as a couple—a journey we are still on.

But we took that leap of faith, just as so many other brides and grooms do.

And, of course, I'd do it all over again. Many days I really can't believe I am fortunate enough to be John's wife and the mother of our children.



We aren't big anniversary celebrators here. We have separate plans today. I'm taking our first grader to a birthday party and John and our older son are going to a train show. We'll be together for dinner at home. For dessert I'm making a dozen cupcakes for our dozen years of marriage.

Last night we went to Mass together at the Cathedral as a family of four, going back to where it all began.



As I was listening to the homily, I was also thinking of our wedding day there, the promises we made, the family and friends who surrounded us, the priests who were with us, the joy I felt throughout the day.



Then I looked over and saw that our 6-year-old had fallen asleep and he was leaning against his father's shoulder, perfectly quiet, perfectly cute, perfectly exhausted from a busy Saturday. I caught John's eye and he smiled back at me, and I

thought—just as I did 12 years ago today—that I must be the luckiest person in the world. And God wouldn't give me so much if He didn't also expect me to do so much.



Then, toward the end of his homily, the deacon quoted from the prayer of St. Ignatius: "Lord, teach me to be generous ... to give and not to count the cost." Wow, I thought. There it is. That's what we are asked to do in marriage, in parenting, in whatever vocation we take on in life.



*Touching the colored light on the Cathedral wall*

Today as we celebrate our marriage, I don't know what we will face in the future—but I look forward to facing it together. And I'll try to remember to give and not count the cost.

Happy anniversary, honey.



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