

# Fifteen years ago today...

When you know, you know.

I had known on our first date. We had talked so much before that day that our first in-person meeting just confirmed what I had been suspecting.

We were engaged less than five months later, and we were married seven months after that. We weren't in a rush, but there was no reason to wait. I was 28, and John was about to turn 37. Were we ready? Hard to say. But we were as ready for marriage as we could be.



When I walked up the aisle at my father's side, I could see John smiling at me from the front of the Cathedral. He looked so handsome and happy. We smiled our way through the whole Mass, as I tried to soak in every moment.

I didn't need every detail of the day to be perfect. I just wanted to be married. But somehow every detail *was* perfect. Our two closest priest friends were there. My godson and his family brought up the gifts. My brother-in-law Eric and godfather read the readings. One friend cantored in the church and sang "Ave Maria" so beautifully I could have cried.

Another friend made our wedding cake. We decorated the reception with hydrangeas we clipped from a bush in my parents' front yard. My father baked cookies for all the guests. I had forgotten to ask Fr. Tom to say grace at the reception, but he stepped up and offered the most beautiful blessing, without any prompting.

Because it was a wedding, not everything went smoothly, of course. My mother wanted us to cut the cake with the knife she and my father had used at their wedding, and we forgot it in the backseat of the car. We had to keep the party going, so we did. The cake got cut with a different knife. The cake got eaten. The world continued to turn.



John used to say he regretted only getting one piece of cake. I regret not hiring a better photographer. Our professional photos in the church ended up blurry, and I was so disappointed. I was trying so hard not to spend money we didn't have—and we succeeded in that. Fortunately, I have the most beautiful images of the day in my mind. And the photos that friends and family took and shared with us are just the icing on the cake. (The photo at the top of this post is by my friend Marcy Dubroff, and the one of us cutting the cake was taken by my sister-in-law Katie.)

We knew we were saying yes to forever, so maybe 15 years doesn't seem like much. But as I look back on that time, I feel so very grateful. Even though we knew we were in love and promised to build this life together, we didn't know how much time we would be given. We didn't know whether we would have children. We didn't know what challenges we would encounter together. We didn't know how the story would go. We still don't.

But I'm thankful that, with God's grace, we are writing it together.