

# Have I ever told you how I met my husband?

You won't believe what I did.

Ten years ago I signed up for—brace yourself—an online Catholic singles dating site.



It was something I had never thought I'd do. I always assumed I'd meet the man I would marry through work or through a friend, perhaps in college or at a party or even at Mass.

That didn't happen.

And soon after ending a dating relationship, I decided to give the online dating site a try. I didn't expect to find a boyfriend or husband or even someone to date. I just thought—or so I told myself—that I could remind myself that there were, in fact, single men who were practicing Catholics.

Besides, my mother—who first used a microwave four years ago and still has no cell phone—thought it was a wonderful idea.

So I went online to a site called StRaphael.net. I created a profile. I paid \$30 or so for three months' worth of access. As I started skimming through profiles, I wondered whether I had wasted my time and money. But I hung in there.



After a week or two, I noticed the profile of a man named John. He had checked all the right boxes on questions about his faith practice and beliefs. He liked to visit used bookstores, and he was a train enthusiast. He worked in media relations for a college in Maryland. That caught my eye because that was my job description, too.

Well, I thought, maybe it would be a networking opportunity.

I sent him a short message, and he wrote back the same day.

Quickly the messages grew longer, the questions and answers back and forth became a real conversation. And I started to fall in love with this amazing writer, deep thinker, and genuinely caring person.

That first exchange happened 10 years ago this week.

Shortly after we met online, I traveled to the west coast with a college friend.



Along the way, I stayed in touch with John when I could, giving him glimpses into my travels as we continued to get to know each other.



### *Lighthouse stairway*

By the time I flew home, we were ready to connect in person. On Aug. 23, 2003, we met on the steps of St. Mark's Church for our first date—Mass and dinner. From that first night we both knew something special was happening, that our prayers were being answered in unexpected ways.

One year, a month, and two days later we were married at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen.



### *Photo by Marcy Dubroff*

Since then we have traveled twice to China to meet our sons, the greatest blessings of our marriage. We have changed jobs more times than I care to count. We've moved three times and, even as I write, are bracing for our fourth move—our first with children.

But it all started 10 years ago when a spontaneous, seemingly insignificant decision—to send a quick message to this person I didn't even know, who had just joined the online dating site himself—became the foundation for a future I could never have imagined or created for myself.

Ten years later I can see God's fingerprints even more clearly.



How did you meet your spouse?

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