

The Commitment Ceremony of Caroline and Laura

Presentation

Parents of Laura and Caroline, before all who are gathered here, I ask you to affirm your blessings, support and encouragement to this union between your daughters. I remind you that although each of them will remain a part of your separate heritage, they are no longer your separate children. Caroline and Laura are here before you to become one. Therefore, I now ask you: do you offer your blessings and loving support to this union?

We do.

Convocation

To Laura and Caroline who have come here to pledge their love and join their lives: may yours always be a shared adventure, rich with moments of serenity, as well as excitement; vital with problems that test, as well as successes that uplift, marked by a sense of personal freedom, as well as mutual responsibility. May you find in each other companionship as well as love; understanding as well as compassion; challenge as well as agreement. May the home you establish be an island where the pressures of a cluttered world can be sorted out and brought into focus; where accumulated tensions can be released and understood; where personal needs do not tower over concern for others and where the immediate does not blur more distant goals; where the warmth of humor and love sheds perspective on both crisis and dullness. And above all, may you find an ever-richer meaning and joy in the high adventure of lifelong loving and learning together. With this in mind, let us pray.

Invocation

Dear God, we have come together today to witness the marriage of Caroline and Laura. We ask that they be blessed in a union of love and understanding, sharing with each other all gladness, strengthening each other in all labor, and ministering to each other in all sorrow. May they stand firmly, side by side, through all the memories of the life they vow to share for each and every day beyond this day, beyond this moment, beyond the here and the now. Bless them with a home in which to dwell warmly and gather the wisdom of the passing seasons. Bless them with kindness to fill their days and sweetness to fill their nights. Above all, may Caroline and Laura be blessed with the realization of long-dreamt dreams and the comforting embrace of peace ever after. Amen.

Ritual

Candle Lighting

The parents of Laura and Caroline each hold a candle representing the light that was brought forth into the world when their children were born. They will now light their children's candles from their candles, a symbol of the life they gave to their daughters. Caroline and Laura will now combine their flames to light one candle as an expression of the union of their individual spirits. Laura and Caroline: the candle you are about to light is a candle of Marriage. Its fire is magical because it represents the light of two people in love. This candle before you is a candle of commitment, because it takes two people working together to keep it aflame. This candle is also a candle of unity because both must come together, giving a spark of themselves, to create the new light. As you light this candle today, may the brightness of the flame shine throughout your lives. May it give you courage and reassurance in darkness, warmth and safety in the cold. May it strengthen your bodies, minds and spirits and light the way to greater joy and happiness than you dared dream.

Reading

Love is a friendship that has caught fire.
It is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving.
It is loyalty through good and bad.
It settles for less than perfection,
and makes allowances for human weakness.
Love is content with the present.
It hopes for the future and it doesn't brood over the past.
It's the day-in and day-out chronicle of irritations, problems,
compromises, small disappointments, big victories,
and working toward common goals.
If you have love in your life,
it can make up for a great many things you lack.
If you don't have it,

no matter what else there is,
it is not enough.

- Translator Unknown, "Love is a Friendship That Has Caught Fire"

Address

For all its ingenuity, humankind has not yet created a vow that is impossible to break. We have developed law and science, industry and technology --- and still, we find devices to deconstruct each one. So it is not I, the minister, nor this state that truly sanctifies the creation of marriage between Laura and Caroline . . . it is only the deepest well of human desire, your desire to live united and complete before the often-imperfect world. Such a wedlock comes only through the ripening of love freely given and shared. The vows you exchange here today before this gathered company are a paradox --- they are strong and reverent enough to bring tears of joy to the eyes in witness, and they are fragile enough to be damaged --- even broken --- by a single gesture or a series of small neglects. Just as the world around you rises and falls in success and undoing, the marriage created between you shall rise and fall with the tides of your life together. Remember the sacredness of this moment, remember the strength of the love that has brought you to this place in time, and remember that you alone, Caroline and Laura, possess the will, the might, and the power to uphold, to preserve, and to bless this union. It is through the sincerity of your purpose, the strength of your common devotion, and the enduring character of your dedication that your marriage will be a vow extraordinarily difficult if not impossible to break.

Expression of Intent

Laura, do you now choose Caroline to be your life companion, to share your life openly with her, to speak truthfully and lovingly to her, to accept her fully as she is and delight in who she is becoming, to respect her uniqueness and compassionately encourage and support her through all the changes of your years together?

I do.

Caroline, do you now choose Laura to be your life companion, to share your life openly with her, to speak truthfully and lovingly to her, to accept her fully as she is and delight in who she is becoming, to respect her uniqueness and compassionately encourage and support her through all the changes of your years together?

I do.

Consecration

This ceremony is about the joining of two people, the union of two hearts. It lives on the love you give each other and never grows old, but thrives on the joy of each new day. May the two of you always be blessed in your hearts with the wonder of this special moment. May you always be able to confide in each other, to laugh with each other, to enjoy life together and to share moments of quiet and peace when the day is done. May you be blessed with a lifetime of happiness and sweetly keep the promises you are about to make.

Vows

I, Laura, choose you, Caroline, in the presence of this community, to be my life companion from this time forward. I promise to love you, to be a comfort and safe haven in your life, to hold you close, to listen deeply when you are sad or angry, to learn compassion with you, to nourish you with my gentleness, to uphold you with my strength, to love you completely as you age, to weigh the effects of the words I speak and of the things I do, to never take you for granted, but always give thanks for your presence.

I, Caroline, choose you, Laura, in the presence of this community, to be my life companion from this time forward. I promise to love you, to be a comfort and safe haven in your life, to hold you close, to listen deeply when you are sad or angry, to learn compassion with you, to nourish you with my gentleness, to uphold you with my strength, to love you completely as you age, to weigh the effects of the words I speak and of the things I do, to never take you for granted, but always give thanks for your presence.

Ring Blessing

The ring is an endless circle, the symbol of the Universe, of infinity. It has neither a beginning nor an end. It is complete in itself, always in peace and harmony. These wedding rings are the symbols of the unending love and friendship that you, Caroline and Laura, share. Let your lives come together today and forever, like the unbroken circles of these rings.

Ring Exchange

Laura, I give you this ring as a token of my abiding love, as a sign that I have chosen you above all others. I promise to love you, to be a comfort and safe haven in your life. As our lives unfold together, I promise to be faithful and to never take you for granted but always give thanks for your presence and the love that you have always given me.

Caroline, I give you this ring as a token of my abiding love, as a sign that I have chosen you above all others. I promise to love you, to be a comfort and safe haven in your life. As our lives unfold together, I promise to be faithful and to never take you for granted but always give thanks for your presence and the love that you have always given me.

Pronouncement

The circle is completed. Let each person here offer in his or her own way a silent prayer that the merged spirit of this gathering engulf and bless the union of Laura and Caroline. May all that is noble and beautiful be with you both always.

Benediction

May the confidence, trust and affection you have for each other on this day sustain you as you go forth upon your journey of life together. May you find and realize all your hopes and dreams, dwelling together in an atmosphere of peace, love and joy. May you never follow where the path leads; may you walk, instead, where there is no path and leave a trail. Go in peace.

Kiss

Now, let the sharing of a kiss begin for the two of you a lifetime of happiness.

Presentation

Friends and family, I present to you Caroline and Laura, the newlyweds.

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