Homily Outline for the Wedding of Wedding of
Ashley Nichole Fister and Christopher Jon Karr
Holy Name Cathedral, Chicago, Illinois
July 22, 2023

✝ Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois

I. "You must be strong with love, which is stronger than death."
  — Pope St. John Paul II (June 10, 1979)

  A. My episcopal motto is "The Law of the Heart is Love," taken in part from today's first reading from Jeremiah 31: "I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts."

    1. What is this law? Romans 13: "Love is the fulfillment of the law."

    2. This is described as a covenant: "I will be your God, you will be my people."

    3. Marriage is a covenant between two people pledging themselves to each other.

  B. In our second reading, St. Paul wrote, "over all these things, put on love."

  C. In the Gospel from St. John, Jesus says, "Remain in my love. . . . This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you."

  D. What is love? It is "more than a feeling," it is a decision to act in a certain way.

  E. St. Thomas Aquinas says love is to will the best for the other person.

II. Example of holy marriage lived by the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

  A. St. Joseph showed his love by his actions, not words.

    1. Notice that Joseph never says a word in the Bible.

    2. Joseph listens to the message of God delivered by an angel and always does the right thing.

  B. Mary showed her love for Jesus in both good times and bad, e.g., she was with Him at the Wedding at Cana and at the foot of the cross.

C. Jesus is at the center of the Holy Family, and should be at the center of our lives.

    1. Story of the man who was having marital difficulties because he loved his wife too much.

    2. If you love your spouse as a god or goddess, you expect perfection!

    3. God must come first, and then everyone and everything else.

III. Song by Martin Doman, "Open Wide the Doors to Christ"[1]

Two thousand years ago, You came into our lives.

You came to bring our hearts back to the warmth of your love.

So we celebrate, we evangelize, we reconcile our hearts to you;

we celebrate, we evangelize, we reconcile our hearts to you.

    Open wide the doors to Christ, let Him come into your heart.

    Open wide, receive His life, we have hope anew in Christ.

For unto us a child was born to you and me.

He came to show that life could be life abundantly.

So we lift His name on high, we praise Him as we sing:

    Open wide the doors to Christ, let Him come into your heart.

    Open wide, receive His life, we have hope anew in Christ.

Jesus comes to us today, He's present in this place.

This Eucharistic meal is our life, our hope, our grace.

So we humbly come receive, we worship, we believe.

    Open wide the doors to Christ, let Him come into your heart.

    Open wide, receive His life, we have hope anew in Christ.

    May God give us this grace. Amen.

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[1] Martin Doman, "Open Wide the Doors to Christ," Compact Disk, *God's Goodness So Far* 1996-2000.