

An Address for the Wedding of Kara Kosten and Marty Hunsucker
December 30, 2005
Holy Cross, Collinsville, Illinois

Your Holy Family

“As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love. If you keep My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.” (John 15:9-12)

Long ago there was a couple that was forced to travel because of some requirement. I assume the couple wasn’t happy about it but, you know, don’t fight city hall, or in their case, the federal government. There was nothing that seemed to set this couple apart from any other couple in the world, a common couple. They were average people, so the Holiday Inn didn’t make any special effort to fine them a room. When that government duty had been taken care of, the couple eventually went back to their hometown. They had a child now, a boy. The boy learned his dad’s trade, carpentry. The mother was a stay-at-home mom. Like all families, they had their griefs. The father died when the boy was probably a teenager. Although the boy was exemplary, perfect in every way, he ended up running afoul of the authorities, though it certainly wasn’t his fault. He was unjustly arrested, unjustly convicted, and unjustly put to death. Yet, today, today, this family is together, all three of them, alive and well. They are experiencing the most complete joy any family can know. You know whom I’m talking about, Mary, Joseph and Jesus, a most uncommon family, **the “Holy Family.”**

What makes a couple a holy family? The presence of Jesus and His love. Mary and Joseph were average people but the presence of the Son of God, the Savior, made that couple a holy family. We do not think of you as average. Marty, anyone who can make all those baseball signs and understand them is not average. Kara, anyone who can make mom and dad tear up with joy is not average. What a great day this is for you. We thank you for inviting us. We wish you the best and all God’s blessings. My message is simple: The presence of Jesus and His love will make you a holy family.

How does the presence of Jesus make you a holy family? He Himself tells us in the Gospel reading that you selected.

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. The Bible tells us that God is triune, Father, Son and Holy Spirit yet only one God. God, Father, Son and Spirit is love (1 John 4:8). The Son, whom we know as Jesus Christ, says, “As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love.” Sound good, a lot of religious sentiment sounds good, but **really, how do you do it?** How do you remain in the love of God that Jesus has brought us? How do you make yours a holy family?

Jesus tells us how to make a family holy. ***If you obey my commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in His love. Marty and Kara, when you obey Jesus’ commands you will be in His love.*** The Bible has many commands. The command for a Christian husband is this: *Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her* (Ephesians 4). The Son of God, that second person in the Godhead, gave Himself up for us.... Kara, you told me that you like traditional things. One old traditional thing in weddings is for the bride to promise to “obey” her husband. It’s really not a bad thing at all, if you understand what the Bible means. The Bible teaches that we husbands should so love our wives... that the wife will return the favor. It’s as simple as that. When you, Marty and Kara, love each other that way, that selfless way that Christ has loved us, your marriage will be uncommon, a holy family.

“I do.” As you “do,” Jesus’ desire will be fulfilled. *I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.* So let’s marry you. The couple has asked me to announce that you all should leave the church and go immediately to the reception. It will begin a little earlier than announced. So let’s get on with it. **In this season of Mary, Joseph and our Savior Jesus, let us exchange vows and celebrate another holy family.** Amen.