

Good morning.

I have the good fortune to serve as the president of Ball State University.

In this role, I have the honor of presiding over many special events and programs, including commencement.

This morning, I have the distinct honor to participate with you in this special ceremony.

On this lawn in this beautiful new venue are approximately 50 Cardinal couples who have gathered to renew their wedding vows.

That's an impressive number. But what is even more impressive is that I learned in the process of preparing for today's event that more than 32,000 Ball State graduates are married to one another—which is about 15 percent of our total number of Ball State graduates.

**Some have been married for many years and others only a short time. In fact, one couple who has joined us today who are celebrating their first wedding anniversary this weekend. Julia and Nate Johnson are you here?
[CONFIRMS] Congratulations. I wish you many more years of happiness together.**

[PAUSE]

Each of you have chosen to join us today because you appreciate that your wedding ceremony was not the culmination of your relationship.

Rather, you know that, since the day that you were married, you have been on an ongoing journey together to strengthen that relationship.

Together, you have shared many joys.

Together, you have shared many blessings.

And, yes, together, you have faced some challenges.

Today, in the presence of family and friends and fellow Cardinals, you want to reaffirm your commitment to each other, so that your relationship will grow stronger with each passing day.

[PAUSE]

I ask you to join hands.

And, I ask all of you to repeat after me:

**— The love I have for you [PAUSE]
is something that I will always cherish.**

**— My love for you has grown stronger [PAUSE]
and more unconditional [PAUSE] since the day we were wed.**

**— I know that my love for you [PAUSE]
will continue to grow, [PAUSE] day after day,
[PAUSE] year after year.**

**— Today, I renew my vow [PAUSE] to
cherish you, [PAUSE] to support you, [PAUSE]
and to love you.**

**— Today, I dedicate myself to you [PAUSE] for
as long as I shall live.**

[PAUSE]

On your wedding, you probably exchanged rings. Rings serve as a reminder of your wedding vows to each other—and as a reminder of your commitment to live in unity and in love.

If you did exchange rings, please continue to hold hands, and please repeat after me.

**— I wear this ring [PAUSE] that you placed on my finger
[PAUSE] as a symbol of my love**

[PAUSE] and my commitment to you.

[PAUSE]

A good marriage is not created in a day.

It is not about marrying the right person.

It is about being the right partner.

In that respect, a good marriage is recreated again each day.

A good marriage is recreated in the little things in life.

A good marriage is recreated in never being too old to hold hands.

A good marriage is recreated each day—or every time—you say to your spouse, “I love you.”

A good marriage is recreated each time you say “thank you” to your spouse.

A good marriage is recreated whenever you demonstrate that gratitude in a meaningful way.

A good marriage is recreated each time you make a small sacrifice for your spouse.

Indeed, perfect love makes sacrifice a joy.

[PAUSE]

Cardinals, today, you have renewed the vows you made to each other on your wedding day. It has been my honor to preside over this special ceremony.

And now, please celebrate this renewal of your vows with a sign of your affection.

[PAUSE]

Chirp! Chirp!