

Hello everyone. Let me begin by congratulating Meg and Marty from the bottom of my heart. I am so happy that this day has come to be. I know Meg has waited patiently for her true love, and I'm so grateful to be a part of your beautiful day!

Meg, I first met you in the days after your birth at a hospital in Rhode Island on a cold January day. I was 2 and a half. Mom and Dad tell me that the moment that I met you for the first time I started singing a song we both know well, a song they often sang to us at bedtime. I was so happy to have a little sister. It would have been a very lonely childhood without you and I also have to thank you for saving me from being the sole receiver of Gabe's torturous antics, I mean, brotherly affection.

One of the earliest memories I have of you is probably dancing around in the living room. We were both captivated by the art of dance very young, and I have vivid memories of going off to our first classes together and practicing around the house. We experienced our first recitals together, our first Nutcrackers, our first pointe shoes, our tryouts for the company. These were formative years for us, and even though we didn't pursue anything in dance beyond our teen years, I am grateful that we have that bond today, the appreciation of beauty and music made even more special as sisters.

Today when I see my own 2 little girls dancing around the living room, strong memories come right back of us holding hands and floating about. I am so happy they have each other because I

know how precious the gift of sisterhood is. I have silly memories of us singing at the top of our lungs at night in our bedroom, and sharing one bed when one of us would have a bad dream, with Mom and Dad banging on the adjoining wall to get us to be quiet. It is my hope for you that someday you will experience this with your own little ones. This is one of the great joys in life.

We have to admit that we are very different, sometimes even like yin and yang. Your looks take after the Irish side, mine after the Italian/Portuguese side. I'm very expressive of my struggles, you tend to hold things in. When we were kids in the summertime, I was like chocolate and you were vanilla (good thing your Father-in-law is a dermatologist!!).

Throughout the years we've had different friends and different tastes, but we share the same family, heritage and the same blood. We've been there for each other through first days of school, first kisses, first everything. I will never ever forget the loving support and encouragement you gave me the day I gave birth to Gianna. I'm not sure I would have made it through that day without you. Life may separate us by many miles, but in the words of Jo March in Little Women, (how many times have we seen that movie, maybe 25?!): *"I could never love anyone as I love my sisters."*

Throughout the years I've had the privilege of going through first time experiences with you by my side. Now that honor will be passed to Marty. You will have many special "firsts" together: your first Christmas as a married couple, your first home, your first child and the joy

of the first time that little helpless babe grabs your finger, that first smile, that first sleepless night together--our lives are marked by these sacred moments.

Marty, you are a lucky one. A blessed man. You have been given our beloved baby Meg. Take care of her always and cherish her. It is hard for us to give her away, but we know you treasure all the things that we love so in her. She has a way of making everyone around her laugh and see the lighter side of life. I have always been so grateful for the gift this has been in my own life.

Cling to this in your marriage, because often humor is the best medicine. I pray that your joyous moments outweigh your times of struggle and doubt. Dark moments will come as they do for every couple, but seeing you two together over the last couple years has given me much peace that you are and will be wonderful help-mates to each other. The best advice I can give you is to try not to take your problems too seriously and to forgive easily; problems always seem lighter in the morning. Love each other much and encourage each other's individual gifts. No spouse can fulfill every desire in your heart, but they can acknowledge your gifts like no one else, and help to realize the deepest longings of your heart.

I am so very happy for you both, and I think I speak on behalf of everyone here tonight when, I wish you both a lifetime of loving faithfulness, laughter and joy.

To Meg and Marty.....