

Kenneth & Crystal Gamradt  
Vow Renewal Ceremony  
Minnesota Renaissance Festival  
August 16, 2003

**Dennis:**

We are gathered together to witness the reaffirmation of the wedding vows of Kenneth and Crystal. After 11 years of marriage they have learned that happiness is not something that just happens. A good marriage must be created. In the art of marriage the little things are the big things. It's never being too old to hold hands. It's remembering to say "I love you" at least once each and every day. It's at no time taking the other for granted. It's having a mutual sense of values and common objectives. It's standing together and facing the world. It's forming a circle of love that gathers the whole family. It's doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice, but in the spirit of joy. It's not looking for perfection in each other. It's cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding, and a sense of humor. It's establishing a relationship in which independence is equal, dependence is mutual, and the obligation is reciprocal.

The poet Meryl Fishman has said...  
"You know me as I really am, and I know you truly.  
Not even as we know ourselves and would present ourselves.  
But to the very core of our beings.  
And we see the good and bad,  
Accepting it with all joy.  
And from this time on our souls are locked in harmony.  
I have become you, you have become me.  
And we call each other love."

What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined together for life, to strengthen each other in all labor, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent, unspeakable memories.

With this reaffirmation ceremony we pray that your lives together will continue to be blessed with health, peace and happiness for you, your children and your family.

Let us pray...

Heavenly Father, may you rain down upon this celebration of love an outpouring of your richest blessings! May the love that these two share with each other continue to be a pattern for others to follow. May they together embrace this moment of reaffirmation and find great peace in knowing that you will continue to walk with them in the journey of life. Direct each step they take and may they find with the dawning of each new day an even greater love and appreciation for each other. Amen.

If thou dost truly desire, Sir Kenneth, to marry this woman, I bid you present to her your blade of steel, pledge your weapon to her, unfailing ever to be at her service.

**Kenneth:** (The groom takes his sword from the knight, and kneeling before the bride, offers it to her saying...)

Gracious and lovely one,  
Accept my pledge of love to thee.  
I pledge this sword, as I pledge my soul,  
Ever to be in your service.  
Like this blade shall my love be strong,  
Like this steel shall my love be enduring.  
Accept it, O beloved one,  
For that which is mine  
Shall also be yours.

**Crystal:** (The bride takes the sword silently in her hands and touches it to her forehead for the time of three heartbeats.)

My lord, I accept your pledge of love  
As I do accept the pledge of your blade.  
Thou knowest what is in my heart  
As I know what is in thine.  
The magic of my will, and of my love  
Shall ever be yours.  
(She returns the sword to him saying...)  
Rise and be my mate.

**Dennis:**

If thou dost truly desire, Lady Crystal, to marry this man, I bid you present to him a jewel of great value as a token of the love you have for him.

**Crystal:** (The bride takes the chest of jewels from the knight, and kneeling before the groom, offers it to him saying...)

Thou who are handsome and strong,  
Accept my jewel, my treasure,  
As a pledge for all which I am,  
And all that I possess shall be yours.  
My love shall ever endure,  
And shall flourish as the vine and the tree.

**Kenneth:** (The groom takes a jewel from the chest silently in his hands and touches it to his forehead for the time of three heartbeats.)

My lady, I accept your pledge of love  
As I do accept the pledge of your jewel.  
Thou knowest what is in my heart  
And I know what is in thine.  
All which I have now, or shall have,  
Shall ever be yours.  
(With the help of her lady in waiting he places the jewel around her neck saying...)  
Rise and be my mate.

**Dennis:**

The word renaissance means rebirth. Today we celebrate the rebirth of your commitment before this honored gathering. With joined hands speak these words from your heart...

**Kenneth:** (individual vows)

This day, Crystal, I recommit my life to yours,  
Not merely as your husband,  
But as your friend, your lover, and your confidant.  
Let me be the shoulder you lean on,  
The rock on which you rest,  
The companion of your life.  
With you I will walk my path from this day forward.

**Crystal:** (individual vows)

This day, Kenneth, I recommit my life to yours,  
Not merely as your wife,  
But as your friend, your lover, and your confidant.  
Let me be the shoulder you lean on,  
The rock on which you rest,  
The companion of your life.  
With you I will walk my path from this day forward.

**Kenneth and Crystal:** (in unison)

If you fly to the furthest reaches of your dream, I will fly with you.  
If you walk among the obstacles of the earth, I will walk with you.  
And should you stumble, I will hold out my hand to you, remembering our love and the promise it holds to renew and begin again.  
I may fly, or walk, or stumble, or stand certain of nothing but our love in the days to come, but I will not be alone in my journey, and I will not fail to be there for you.  
Remembering your ideals and ambitions, encouraging your freedom to grow, and remembering always that the most important lessons are to be learned from one another, I, Kenneth/Crystal, pledge to you, from this day forward.

**Dennis:** (Handfasting / Blessing)

A reaffirmation of wedding vows is a renewal of a life long commitment to an intimate partnership between two people. This commitment is woven together with trust, with support and with fidelity. It is based in love and affection, a bonding between two people. This bonding is of the physical body, of the human personality and of the inner spiritual being. Handfasting is performed to represent this bond. The knots of this handfasting are not formed by the binding of these chords but instead by your vows. It is up to the two of you to make sure that the knots of these chords remain strong. You alone hold in your own hands the making or breaking of this union.

Is it your wish to become bound with each other?

**Kenneth and Crystal:**

It is.

(With each chord a blessing is said.)

**Dennis:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> chord: Dark Blue

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter for the other.

Join your hands.

\*First chord is draped across the bride and grooms hands.\*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> chord: Purple

Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other.

\*Second chord is draped across the couple's hands.\*

The 3<sup>rd</sup> chord: Red

Now there will be no loneliness, for each of you will be companion to the other.

\*Third chord is draped across the couple's hands.\*

The 4<sup>th</sup> chord: White

Now you are two persons, but there is only one life before you.

\*Fourth chord is draped across the couple's hands.\*

The 5<sup>th</sup> chord: Green

May beauty surround you both in the journey ahead and through all the years.

\*Fifth chord is draped across the couple's hands.\*

The 6<sup>th</sup> chord: Gold

May happiness be your companion and your days together be good and long upon the earth.

\*Sixth chord is draped across the couple's hands.\*

\*Tie chords together while saying:\*

With these chords, I bind you to the vows that you each have made. By the knots of these chords your love is united.

May the Lord smile upon this union and bless this couple with health and prosperity. For remember what one may not provide, the other may. So are you bound, in the light of the Lord, each to the other, unto all of your days.

Then as witness to this rite  
I now proclaim you husband and wife!  
Now your hands are fasted, the work of joy is done, and yet begun!

Be together in harmony and let the winds of heaven dance between you. Empower each other and allow your relationship to evolve to its highest purpose. Nourish each others possibilities, and lift up each others spirits. Care for one another, share your love openly, and let it be a moving sea between the shores of your soul. Sing and dance together, and be joyful! Share your lives with each other, and unite your love with our Creator. May your union last through all your moments together, so that in the triumphs and trials that lie ahead, you will feel as you do now, happy to be in love and married to one another. Go now in peace and live more and more in the present, which is beautiful, and stretches always beyond the limits of the past toward the horizon of the future.

Lord, inspire this man and this woman who bear the titles "husband and wife." Help them to look to you, to themselves and to one another to rediscover the fullness and mystery of the love they have for each other. Let them be honest enough to ask, "where have we been together and where are we going?" Help them examine their commitment in the light of your love, willingly, openly and compassionately. Help them, together, to believe how fragile, yet powerful, how weak, yet attainable their love can be. Give this husband and wife the courage to be for each other a person rather than a title.

Having heard the promises which the two of you have made to each other, it gives me great pleasure to wish you both a long, happy, and wonderful life together.

We hope that the inspiration of this day will not be forgotten. May you continue to love one another forever and a day.

Please kiss as you pledge your lives together.

(Signal to those in attendance to rise)

It is with great pleasure that I reintroduce to you  
Lord Kenneth  
Lady Crystal  
Lord and Lady Gamradt