

| Wedding Ceremony, July 2015 |

II. Blessing of the Wine

Please rise for the blessing of the wine.

Blessed art thou, king of the universe, and creator of the vine who has kept us and sustained us so that we might reach this day.

Why do we bless the wine (besides the fact that it is delicious)?

Biologically, the grape contains more fructose than most any other fruit – which forms to nurture and sustain the growth of its seed. Each grape is therefore a tiny globe of life-giving energy. The vine represents the full life cycle from seed to harvest and requires the synergy of earth, water, air and fiery sunlight. Man's harmonious intervention in the wine cellar and our consumption of the fruit thus fulfills our own divine role among the elements. We become part of the cycle.

IV. What does marriage mean?

When you asked me to perform your ceremony, I asked you to think about what love and marriage mean to you both, and began an arduous excavation into the database our favorite scenes and songs.

In Season 6, Episode 14 of 'The Golden Girls' Blanche's brother plans a commitment ceremony with his long-time boyfriend. Sophia enters the kitchen late at night and says,

I've been thinking about Clayton and Doug, and I have a question. Why do men have nipples? You think it's because god has a sense of humor or isn't as uptight as the rest of us?

What follows is, in typical Golden Girls fashion, an eloquent and enlightened social commentary way ahead of its time.

But I would like to focus on the nipples.

Nature works in ways we may not always understand. We are constantly evolving. Life at times, like six of the nipples here today, might not make sense. Since the dawn of man, we have spent our lives trying to explain the natural world in all its marvels and mysteries.

While nature pertains not only to the physical world – to plants and animals, to the rise and fall of the sun, moon and stars. Nature also refers to the essence of something or someone. The inherent qualities that make it what it is, that make us who we are.

As we confront the absurdities and uncertainties of life, when the laws of nature seem to work against us, we find fortitude in our own nature, within ourselves.

Dan and Monty, when the world around you whirls at impossible speeds and presents you with insurmountable challenges, you have each other and life makes sense.

V. The lighting of the Eternal Flame

Dan, Monty, please join me in lighting this candle. A symbol of that initial spark at Roscoe's back in 1999, a symbol of enduring passion, of warmth, and life.

Be the light, Spread the light.

Your union has thrown a little more light into your lives and into ours.

Dan, Monty. For your vows I've drawn from one of my favorite Sufi poets, Rumi, and one of our favorite films.

Please repeat after me, together:

In your light I learn how to love.
In your beauty, how to make poems.
You dance inside my chest where no one sees you,
but sometimes I do, and that sight becomes this art. (RUMI)

There's only one place I call home,
and it's because you're there. (Birdcage)
By the power vested in me by the City and State of New York I now pronounce
you, married.

(Kiss, kiss!)