

Subj: **Thank you - thank you SO much!**
Date: 3/16/04 1:11:27 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: pmartinez@monroecc.edu
To: marion@uuwe.tport.org

Reverend Visel:

We are one of the elated couples that you married on Saturday, March 13. We desperately wanted to tell you how much we appreciate what you did, not just for us, but for all of our brothers and sisters in the Gay and Lesbian community.

We saw the police that morning, and only later learned it was to give you and the other two ministers the warnings. Throughout the course of the day, this weighed heavily on our minds, how much you were willing to risk and how much was sacrificed by so many others. We knew about the charges against Mayor West and knew that you could well be facing a similar legal challenge. We are truly touched and in awe of the personal commitment that so many people have made to perfect strangers. And, while we knew that the risk to you was great and to us almost nonexistent, we knew that this was truly what we had to do, all of us, if we're ever to live truly equal to the rest of the nation's citizens. We had to let you take that risk, we know. It doesn't make it easier for us to know that you likely will be charged along with the Revs. Greenleaf and Sangrey but we also understand that without the sacrifices that people like you make, our love for each other will always be considered "dirty," and an "abomination."

While I may be more optimistic than others, I believe that New York state may "fall" sooner than others and that our marriages will be legalized and you will be able to perform these types of ceremonies without the specter of criminal charges lurking around every corner.

And when that day comes, we want to have a **real** wedding – the kind that comes with stress, family meddling, wedding cakes, flowers... the works. And we would be honored to have you perform the ceremony, paying your travel expenses and giving you lodging for the night. We cannot think of anyone we would want to do this more than you.

And until that day comes, we give our solemn promise that we will never take one minute together for granted, and that the vows we made in front of you this past Saturday will be honored and cherished. We vow to make the sacrifice you made for all of us, meaningful.

Thank you so much again!

Pat Martinez and Lisa Golden