

Subj: **March 13 ceremonies**
Date: 3/24/04 11:30:27 AM Eastern Standard Time
From: sbirden@adelphia.net
To: mbvisel@aol.com

Rev. Visel,

We tracked your e mail address down through one of the couples that was married in New Paltz on March 13th. We told you then, but we wanted to say again, what a gift you gave us by officiating our ceremony. It was such an act of courage for you to go there and be part of this ceremony, knowing that you would probably end up in court--or possibly jail-- as a result. We were truly moved and honored by your conviction and action.

That day at New Paltz affected us in ways that we never expected. We've been together for 16 years and while we hoped that one day we could exchange vows in marriage, we never believed that it would actually occur. So we expected this much-anticipated day to be a moving one for us, but it impacted us in ways that we never expected. We were prepared for protesters, policemen, and reporters. We were not prepared for the outpouring of caring that occurred from the moment that we arrived in New Paltz on Friday night at the bed and breakfast through the day on Saturday. We were not prepared for 200 volunteers to give their time to make our day special. We were not prepared to come face to face with the strength of conviction from the ministers. What a gift you gave us. Thanks so much.

Susan Birden and Colleen Kavanaugh