

Contents

Preface	v
Using This Booklet	1
Frequently Asked Questions	3
Three Forms of the Rite of Marriage	10
Entrance Rite	11
<i>Collect</i>	11
Liturgy of the Word	14
<i>Choosing Your Readings</i>	14
Old Testament Readings	15
Responsorial Psalms	35
New Testament Readings	43
Alleluia and Verse before the Gospel	67
Gospel Readings	69
Rite of Marriage	86
<i>Introduction and Questions of Intent</i>	86
<i>Consent/Marriage Vows</i>	87
<i>Reception of Consent</i>	89
<i>Blessing and Exchange of Rings</i>	89
<i>General Intercessions or Prayer of the Faithful</i>	90
Sample Intercessions	91
Liturgy of the Eucharist (For Weddings Celebrated During Mass)	93
<i>Prayer over the Offerings</i>	93
<i>Preface</i>	94
Nuptial Blessing	97
<i>Sign of Peace</i>	101
<i>Prayer after Communion</i>	101

Concluding Rite	103
<i>Final or Solemn Blessing</i>	103
<i>Recessional</i>	106
Conclusion of the Rite for Celebrating Marriage Between a Catholic and an Unbaptized Person	107
<i>General Intercessions</i>	107
<i>Nuptial Blessing</i>	108
<i>Lord's Prayer and Final Blessing</i>	109
Appendices	110
A. <i>Marriage between a Catholic and a Non-Catholic</i>	110
B. <i>Having an Existing Marriage Blessed or Convalidated by the Church</i>	112
C. <i>Honoring Ethnic and Cultural Traditions</i>	113
D. <i>Five Tips for Keeping Your Love Strong</i>	115
Contributors	119

Rite of Marriage

The *Rite of Marriage* is at the heart of the wedding liturgy. Your exchange of vows before a priest or deacon ("the presider"), two primary witnesses, and the gathered assembly of your family and friends joins you together for life. In this sacramental moment, bride and groom are the primary ministers. They assure each other of love and faithfulness, and together they ask God to sustain and nourish forever their holy bond. In this way, they consent to be a sacred sign of his love in the world.

Introduction and Questions of Intent

The presider will invite you both to come forward and stand in front of the assembly and before the altar to exchange your vows. He may also ask your two primary witnesses (best man and maid/matron of honor) and others in the wedding party to stand with you. He will say the following words or something quite similar and then ask you to state your intention to enter into marriage.

G1

My dear friends, you have come together in this church so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love in the presence of the Church's minister and this community. Christ abundantly blesses this love. He has already consecrated you in baptism and now he enriches and strengthens you by a special sacrament so that you may assume the duties of marriage in mutual and lasting fidelity. And so, in the presence of the Church, I ask you to state your intentions.

After the introduction, the presider will ask you a series of questions by which you declare your intention to enter this marriage freely, faithfully, and for life, and that you are open to the gift of children. Each of you will answer the questions for yourself.

N. and N., have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage?

Will you love and honor each other as man and wife for the rest of your lives?

The following question may be omitted if, for example, the couple is advanced in years.

Will you accept children lovingly from God and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?

G2

If marriage is celebrated between a Catholic and an unbaptized person, this formula is used:

My dear friends, you have come together in this church so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love in the presence of the Church's minister and this community. In this way you will be strengthened to keep mutual and lasting fidelity with each other and to carry out the other duties of marriage. And so, in the presence of the Church, I ask you to state your intentions.

The priest will then question you about your freedom in choosing marriage, faithfulness to each other, and openness to children. Each of you will answer the questions for yourself.

N. and N. have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage?

Will you love and honor each other as man and wife for the rest of your lives?

The following question may be omitted if, for example, the couple is advanced in years.

Will you accept children lovingly from God, and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?

Consent/Marriage Vows



Next come your marriage vows. The Church calls this "consent" because you are consenting, or saying "I do," to the love that will continue to grow between the two of you and to the many blessings, challenges, growth, and even heartache that marriage will bring. You are also consenting to be a sacramental sign of God's love to all those who encounter you, for marriage points to the covenantal love that God has for his people. By exchanging marriage vows—by giving your consent—you say yes to this new role you assume in the Church and in the world. The two forms of consent differ slightly. Read through the options and record your choice on the selection form. Talk with your presider about how to handle

the exchange of vows, particularly if you are nervous about forgetting your lines. Often, the priest or deacon will say one phrase or sentence at a time and then ask you to repeat it.

H1

Since it is your intention to enter into marriage, join your right hands, and declare your consent before God and his Church.

You will join hands and the groom begins:

I, N., take you, N., to be my wife. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

The bride says:

I, N., take you, N., to be my husband. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

If, however, it seems preferable for pastoral reasons, the presider may obtain consent from the couple through questions.

First he asks the bridegroom:

N., do you take N. to be your wife? Do you promise to be true to her in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love her and honor her all the days of your life?

The groom: I do.

Then he asks the bride:

N., do you take N. to be your husband? Do you promise to be true to him in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love him and honor him all the days of your life?

The bride: I do.

H2

In the dioceses of the United States, the following alternative form may be used:

I, N., take you N., for my lawful wife (husband), to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for

richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.

If it seems preferable for pastoral reasons for the priest to obtain consent from the couple through questions, in the dioceses of the United States the following alternative form may be used:

N., do you take N. for your lawful wife (husband), to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?

Each, in turn, responds: **I do.**

Reception of Consent

On behalf of the Church and the people of God, the priest or deacon receives the consent of the couple by saying:

You have declared your consent before the Church. May the Lord in his goodness strengthen your consent and fill you both with his blessings.

What God has joined, men must not divide.

Amen.

Blessing and Exchange of Rings



Your wedding rings will become a symbol of the vows you take. The circles convey the unending nature of your bond, and the precious metal expresses its strength and immeasurable value. Your rings are an important reminder not just to you but also to all whom you meet of the sacred union you share with your spouse. Usually one of your primary witnesses holds the rings while the priest or deacon blesses them, using one of the following blessings.

Choose one of the blessings below and record it on your selection form.

I1

**May the Lord bless + these rings
which you give to each other
as the sign of your love and fidelity.**

All respond: Amen.



Other forms of the blessing:

I2

Lord, bless these rings which we bless + in your name
 Grant that those who wear them
 may always have a deep faith in each other.
 May they do your will
 and always live together
 in peace, good will, and love.
 We ask this through Christ our Lord.
All respond: Amen.

I3

Lord,
 bless + and consecrate N. and N.
 in their love for each other.
 May these rings be a symbol
 of true faith in each other,
 and always remind them of their love.
 We ask this through Christ our Lord.
All respond: Amen.

As the bridegroom places his wife's ring on her ring finger, he may say:

N., take this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity.
 In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
 Spirit.

As the bride places her husband's ring on his ring finger, she may say:

N., take this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity.
 In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
 Spirit.



When using the *Rite for Celebrating Marriage Between a Catholic and an Unbaptized Person*, please turn to page 107 for the General Intercessions and conclusion of the ceremony.

General Intercessions/Prayer of the Faithful

During the wedding ceremony the community celebrates a love that is meant to touch many people. So it is fitting that, after you exchange your consent and become husband and wife, we pause to offer prayers for all those in need of God's love and healing. The General Intercessions (or Prayer of the Faithful) should include prayers for the Church, for peace in the world, for you as a new couple, for the sick and those unable to be present, and for any deceased family and friends.

You can choose one of the sample sets of intercessions that follow or write your own. These sample prayers are available in electronic form at togetherforlifeonline.com. If you are invited to write your own, visit the same website for instructions and a simple worksheet that will help you do so.

Sample Intercessions

J1

1. For the Church throughout the world. May our faith in the love God has for us be expressed in our love for one another.

We pray to the Lord.

2. For peace in our world. May all lands that suffer violence and injustice find peace and reconciliation.

We pray to the Lord.

3. For the poor, the homeless, and for those who are unemployed. May our care and concern for those in need be a sign of God's love.

We pray to the Lord.

4. For the protection and sanctity of human life from conception until natural death. May all people be treated with the dignity they deserve as God's children.

We pray to the Lord.

5. For all those preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage. May they grow in wisdom and grace, and see their vocation to married life as a sign of God's love.

We pray to the Lord.

6. For N. and N., who begin their married life together this day. May they experience the love of God, the support of family and friends, and the blessings of children.

We pray to the Lord.

7. For all those who have died, especially the relatives and friends of N. and N. and of all present for this wedding. May they enjoy perfect happiness and total fulfillment in eternal life.

We pray to the Lord.

J2

1. For the Church and its leaders. May our commitment to the Gospel lead us to deepen our faith and trust in God.

We pray to the Lord.

2. For our world and its leaders. May all people be treated with the dignity they deserve as God's children.

We pray to the Lord.

3. For our country and those who defend it. May our men and women who serve in the military be kept safe from all harm.

We pray to the Lord.

4. For those who are sick, lonely, or depressed. May they be strengthened by God's love and aided by friends and family.

We pray to the Lord.

5. For all of our guests gathered here with us today. May they enjoy the warm company of family and friends and have safe travel on their journey home.

We pray to the Lord.

6. For N. and N., May they live long, blessed lives together, may their love grow stronger each and every day, and may they build a family rooted in faith and unconditional love.

We pray to the Lord.

7. For N. and N. (*fill in names of your deceased loved ones*) and all who have died. May they know the peace and fullness of eternal life with God.

We pray to the Lord.



When using the *Rite for Celebrating Marriage Outside Mass*, please turn to page 97 for the Nuptial Blessing.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

(For Weddings Celebrated During Mass)

The Great Sacrament of Matrimony

The love that you share as husband and wife finds its source in the love God has for us. This love was made perfectly manifest in the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. His sacrificial love freed us from sin and opened for us the gift of eternal life. In the Eucharist, that sacrifice of love is made really and truly present again and becomes for us the nourishment we need to live lives of love, forgiveness, and compassion. The bread and wine brought forth represent the gift of our lives to God, and in exchange God gives us the gift of his very self in the Eucharist.

Once the altar is prepared and the gifts brought forth, the priest will say one of the following prayers over the gifts, asking God to accept them along with the love offered by you as a couple.

Prayer over the Offerings



Choose one of these prayers and record it on your selection form.

K1

Receive, we pray, O Lord,
the offering made on the occasion
of this sealing of the sacred bond of Marriage,
and, just as your goodness is its origin,
may your providence guide its course.
Through Christ our Lord.

K2

Receive in your kindness, Lord,
the offerings we bring in gladness before you,
and in your fatherly love
watch over those you have joined in a sacramental covenant.
Through Christ our Lord.

K3

Show favor to our supplications, O Lord,
and receive with a kindly countenance