

THE ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY WITHIN MASS



The Introductory Rites

The First Form

45. At the appointed time, the Priest, wearing an alb and a stole and chasuble of the colour of the Mass to be celebrated, goes with the servers to the door of the church, receives the bridal party, and warmly greets them, showing that the Church shares in their joy.
46. The procession to the altar then takes place in the customary manner. Meanwhile, the Entrance Chant takes place.
47. The Priest approaches the altar, reverences it with a profound bow, and venerates it with a kiss. After this, he goes to the chair.

The Second Form

48. At the appointed time, the Priest, wearing an alb and a stole and chasuble of the colour of the Mass to be celebrated, goes with the servers to the place prepared for the couple or to his chair.
49. When the couple have arrived at their place, the Priest receives them and warmly greets them, showing that the Church shares in their joy.
50. Then, during the Entrance Chant, the Priest approaches the altar, reverences it with a profound bow, and venerates it with a kiss. After this, he goes to the chair.

51. Then, after the Sign of the Cross has been made, the Priest greets those present, using one of the formulas provided in *The Roman Missal*.

52. Then, in these or similar words, the Priest addresses the couple and those present to dispose them inwardly for the celebration of Marriage:

We have come rejoicing into the house of the Lord
for this celebration, dear brothers and sisters,
and now we stand with **N.** and **N.**
on the day they intend to form a home of their own.
For them this is a moment of unique importance.
So let us support them
with our affection,
with our friendship,
and with our prayer as their brothers and sisters.
Let us listen attentively with them
to the word that God speaks to us today.
Then, with holy Church,

let us humbly pray to God the Father,
through Christ our Lord,
for this couple, his servants,
that he lovingly accept them,
bless them,
and make them always one.

53. **Or:**

N. and **N.**, the Church shares your joy

and warmly welcomes you,
together with your families and friends,
as today,

in the presence of God our Father,
you establish between yourselves
a lifelong partnership.

May the Lord hear you on this your joyful day.

May he send you help from heaven and protect you.

May he grant you your hearts' desire
and fulfil every one of your prayers.

The Penitential Act is omitted. The Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest) is said according to the rubric of the Roman Missal, Ritual Masses, V. For the Celebration of Marriage.

54. **On those days when Ritual Masses are permitted, the Mass “For the Celebration of Marriage” is used with the proper readings.**

However, on those days listed in nos. 1-4 of the Table of Liturgical Days, the Mass of the day is used, retaining the Nuptial Blessing in the Mass and, if appropriate, the proper formula for the final blessing.

If, however, during Christmas and Ordinary Time, the parish community participates in a Sunday Mass during which Marriage is celebrated, the Mass of the Sunday is used.

The Liturgy of the Word

55. **The Liturgy of the Word is celebrated in the usual manner. There may be three readings, of which the First Reading should be from the Old Testament, but, during Easter Time, from the Book of Revelation (nos. 179-222). At least one reading that explicitly speaks of Marriage must always be chosen.**

56. **When the Ritual Mass is not said, one of the readings may be taken from those provided in the Lectionary for that Mass, except on a day listed in nos. 1-4 of the Table of Liturgical Days.**

Readings that particularly express the importance and dignity of Marriage in the mystery of salvation are provided here.

The material in this section is taken from nos. 801-805 of the *Ordo lectionum Missae (editio typica altera)*.

Since different translations of the *Ordo lectionum Missae (Lectionary for Mass)* are used in the various English-speaking Conferences of Bishops, only the biblical references are provided in this section.

The version of the headings, incipits, psalm responses, and Alleluia Verses and Verses before the Gospel approved for use by the Conferences of Bishops are to be inserted in this section.

THE FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Genesis

1:26-28, 31a

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 127 (128):1-2, 3, 4-5ac and 6a (R. cf.1 or 4)

THE SECOND READING

A reading from the Letter of the Saint Paul
to the Ephesians

5:2a, 25-32

The word of the Lord.

THE ALLELUIA AND THE VERSE BEFORE THE GOSPEL

cf. Psalm 133 (134):3

Or, during Lent:

cf. 1 John 4:16b, 12, 11

THE GOSPEL

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

19:3-6

The Gospel of the Lord.

57. After the reading of the Gospel, the Priest in the Homily uses the sacred text to expound the mystery of Christian Marriage, the dignity of conjugal love, the grace of the Sacrament, and the responsibilities of married people, keeping in mind, however, the various circumstances of individuals.

The Celebration of Matrimony

58. If two or more Marriages happen to be celebrated at the same time, the Questions before the Consent, the Consent itself, and also the Reception of the Consent must always take place individually for each Marriage; the remaining parts, however, including the Nuptial Blessing, should be spoken once for all in the plural.
59. With all standing, including the couple and the witnesses, who are positioned near them, the Priest addresses the couple in these or similar words:

Dearly beloved,
you have come together into the house of the Church,
so that in the presence of the Church's minister and the community
your intention to enter into Marriage
may be strengthened by the Lord with a sacred seal.
Christ abundantly blesses the love that binds you.
Through a special Sacrament,
he enriches and strengthens
those he has already consecrated by Holy Baptism,
that they may be faithful to each other for ever
and assume all the responsibilities of married life.
And so, in the presence of the Church,
I ask you to state your intentions.

The Questions before the Consent

60. The Priest then questions them about their freedom of choice, fidelity to each other, and the acceptance and upbringing of children, and each responds separately.

N. and N., have you come here to enter into Marriage

without coercion,
freely and wholeheartedly?

The bridegroom and bride each say:

I have.

The Priest continues:

Are you prepared, as you follow the path of Marriage,
to love and honour each other
for as long as you both shall live?

The bridegroom and bride each say:

I am.

The following question may be omitted, if circumstances suggest this, for example, if the couple are advanced in years.

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

The bridegroom and bride each say:

I am.

The Consent

61. The Priest invites them to declare their consent:

Since it is your intention to enter the covenant of Holy Matrimony,
join your right hands and declare your consent
before God and his Church.

They join their right hands.

62. The bridegroom says:

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

The bride says:

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

The following alternative form may be used:

The bridegroom says:

I, N., take you, N., for my lawful wife,
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.

The bride says:

I, N., take you, N., for my lawful 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.

63. If, however, it seems preferable for pastoral reasons, the Priest may obtain the consent of the contracting parties through questioning.

First, the Priest asks the bridegroom:

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

The bridegroom replies:

I do.

Next, the Priest asks the bride:

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

The bride replies:

I do.

The Reception of the Consent

64. Then, receiving their consent, the Priest says to the bride and bridegroom:

May the Lord in his kindness strengthen the consent
you have declared before the Church,
and graciously bring to fulfilment his blessing within you.
What God joins together, let no one put asunder.

Or:

May the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob,
the God who joined together our first parents in paradise,
strengthen and bless in Christ
the consent you have declared before the Church,
so that what God joins together, no one may put asunder.

65. *The Priest invites those present to praise God:*

Let us bless the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Another acclamation may be sung or said.

The Blessing and Giving of Rings

66. *The Priest says:*

May the Lord bless ✠ these rings,
which you will give to each other
as a sign of love and fidelity.

1. Amen.

Other formulas for blessing the rings, nos. 229-230.

He sprinkles the rings, as the circumstances so suggest, and gives them to the bride and bridegroom.

67. *The husband places his wife's ring on her ring finger, saying, as the circumstances so suggest:*

N., receive 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.

Likewise, the wife places her husband's ring on his ring finger, saying, as the circumstances so suggest:

N., receive 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.

68. *Then a hymn or canticle of praise may be sung by the whole community.*

The Universal Prayer

69. *The Universal Prayer then takes place in the usual manner (examples are provided in nos. 251-252).
After this, the Symbol or Creed is said, if required by the rubrics.*

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

70. If appropriate, at the Preparation of the Gifts the bride and bridegroom may bring the bread and wine to the altar.
71. A commemoration of the husband and wife in the Eucharistic Prayer is made with a formula provided in nos. 237-239.

The Nuptial Blessing

72. After the Our Father, the prayer Deliver us is omitted. The Priest, standing and facing the bride and bridegroom, invokes upon them God's blessing, which is never omitted.

In the invitation, if one or both of the spouses will not be receiving Communion, the words in parentheses are omitted.

In the last paragraph of the prayer, the words in parentheses may be omitted if it seems that circumstances suggest it, for example, if the bride and bridegroom are advanced in years.

73. The bride and bridegroom approach the altar or, if appropriate, they remain at their place and kneel.

The Priest, with hands joined, calls upon those present to pray:

Dear brothers and sisters,
let us humbly pray to the Lord
that on these his servants, now married in Christ,
he may mercifully pour out
the blessing of his grace
and make of one heart in love
(by the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood)
those he has joined by a holy covenant.

Other formulas, nos. 104, 241, 243.

And all pray in silence for a while.

74. Then the Priest, with hands extended over the bride and bridegroom, continues:

O God, who by your mighty power
created all things out of nothing,
and, when you had set in place
the beginnings of the universe,
formed man and woman in your own image,
making the woman an inseparable helpmate to the man,
that they might no longer be two, but one flesh,
and taught that what you were pleased to make one
must never be divided;

O God, who consecrated the bond of Marriage
by so great a mystery
that in the wedding covenant you foreshadowed
the Sacrament of Christ and his Church;

O God, by whom woman is joined to man
and the companionship they had in the beginning
is endowed with the one blessing
not forfeited by original sin
nor washed away by the flood.

Look now with favour on these your servants,
joined together in Marriage,

who ask to be strengthened by your blessing.
Send down on them the grace of the Holy Spirit
and pour your love into their hearts,
that they may remain faithful in the Marriage covenant.

May the grace of love and peace
abide in your daughter **N.**,
and let her always follow the example of those holy women
whose praises are sung in the Scriptures.

May her husband entrust his heart to her,
so that, acknowledging her as his equal
and his joint heir to the life of grace,
he may show her due honour
and cherish her always
with the love that Christ has for his Church.

And now, Lord, we implore you:
may these your servants
hold fast to the faith and keep your commandments;
made one in the flesh,
may they be blameless in all they do;
and with the strength that comes from the Gospel,
may they bear true witness to Christ before all;
(may they be blessed with children,
and prove themselves virtuous parents,
who live to see their children's children).

And grant that,
reaching at last together the fullness of years
for which they hope,
they may come to the life of the blessed
in the Kingdom of Heaven.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Other formulas for the Nuptial Blessing, nos. 242, 244.

75. The prayer Lord Jesus Christ is omitted, and The peace of the Lord is said immediately. Then the bride and bridegroom and all present offer one another a sign that expresses peace and charity.

76. The bride and bridegroom, their parents, witnesses, and relatives may receive Communion under both kinds.

The Conclusion of the Celebration

77. At the end of Mass, the Priest, with hands extended over the bride and bridegroom, says:

May God the eternal Father
keep you of one heart in love for one another,
that the peace of Christ may dwell in you
and abide always in your home.
Amen.

May you be blessed in your children,
have solace in your friends

and enjoy true peace with everyone.
Amen.

May you be witnesses in the world to God's charity,
so that the afflicted and needy who have known your kindness
may one day receive you thankfully
into the eternal dwelling of God.
Amen.

And he blesses all present, adding:

And may almighty God bless all of you, who are gathered here,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Other formulas, nos. 249-250.

78. *When the Mass is concluded, the witnesses and the Priest sign the Marriage record. The signing may take place either in the vesting room or in the presence of the people; however, it is not to be done on the altar.*