

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage

This service will be used when there is to be no celebration of the eucharist.

The Gathering of the Community

The people stand. The bride and bridegroom stand before the celebrant.

Celebrant The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Dear friends, we have come together in the presence of God to witness the marriage of *N* and *N*, and to rejoice with them.

Marriage is a gift of God and a means of his grace, in which man and woman become one flesh. It is God's purpose that, as husband and wife give themselves to each other in love, they shall grow together and be united in that love, as Christ is united with his Church.

The union of man and woman in heart, body, and mind is intended for their mutual comfort and help, that they may know each other with delight and tenderness in acts of love [and that they may be blessed in the procreation, care, and upbringing of children].

In marriage, husband and wife give themselves to each other, to care for each other in good times and in bad. They are linked to each other's families, and they begin a new life together in the community.

It is a way of life that all should reverence, and none should lightly undertake.

If anyone present knows a reason why *N* and *N* may not lawfully marry, they must declare it now.

N and *N*, if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

N and *N* have come to enter this holy state. They have complied with Civil and Canon Law and have been duly prepared to enter into marriage. They will each give their consent to the other; they will exchange solemn vows, and in token of this, they will (each) give and receive a ring.

We pray with them that by God's help they may fulfil his purpose for the whole of their earthly life together.

Let us pray.

God our Father,
you have taught us through your Son
that love is the fulfilling of the law.
Grant to these your servants
that loving one another
they may continue in your love
until their lives' end;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People

Amen.

The Proclamation of the Word

One or more readings, including a Gospel reading, shall normally be read. Members of the family and friends of the bride and groom may read lessons. A psalm, canticle, hymn, anthem, or period of silence may follow the lessons. Suggested readings may be found on p. 549. The readings and the response shall be selected in consultation with the bride and groom.

At the conclusion of readings from the Old Testament and the New Testament writings other than the Gospels, the reader says,

The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Silence may be kept. A psalm, canticle, hymn, or anthem may follow.

All stand for the Gospel.

Reader The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**

Reader The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to . . .

People **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

At the conclusion of the Gospel, the reader says,

The Gospel of Christ.
People **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

A sermon may follow.

The Wedding

The people stand. The celebrant says to the bridegroom,

N will you give yourself to N to be her husband:
to love her, comfort her, honour and protect her;
and forsaking all others, to be faithful to her
so long as you both shall live?

Bridegroom **I will.**

The celebrant says to the bride,

N will you give yourself to N to be his wife:
to love him, comfort him, honour and protect him;
and forsaking all others, to be faithful to him
so long as you both shall live?

Bride **I will.**

The celebrant may address the following question to the families of the bride and bridegroom.

Do you, members of the families of N and N, give your blessing to this marriage?

Answer **We do.**

The celebrant addresses the following to all present.

You are the witnesses to these vows now being made. Will you do all in your power to support and uphold this marriage?

Answer **We will.**

The bride and bridegroom face each other and join hands.

Bridegroom I N take you N to be my wife,
to have and to hold
from this day forward;
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
for the rest of our lives,
according to God's holy law.
This is my solemn vow.

Bride I N take you N to be my husband,
to have and to hold
from this day forward;
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
for the rest of our lives,
according to God's holy law.
This is my solemn vow.

They loose hands. The celebrant receives the ring(s) and addresses the congregation in these or similar words.

Dear friends in Christ,
let us ask God to bless *this ring*,
that *it* may be a symbol of the vow and covenant
N and N have made this day.

The community may pray silently. The celebrant then says,

Blessed are you,
God of steadfast love,
source of our joy and end of our hope.
Bless *this ring* given and received
that *it* may be a symbol of the vow and covenant
N and N have made this day,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People **Amen.**

The bridegroom (and the bride in her turn) places the ring on the ring-finger of the other's hand and says,

N, I give you this ring
as a symbol of my vow.
With all that I am and all that I have,
I honour you in the name of God.

The bride and bridegroom join right hands.

Celebrant N and N have joined themselves to each other by solemn vows, signified by the joining of hands and the giving and receiving of *a ring*. I declare that they are husband and wife, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder.

People **Amen.**

The register may be signed at this time or at the end of the service.

The Prayers of the People

The Prayers of the People may be led by a friend or member of a family of the bride or groom, or by the celebrant or another minister.

Leader Let us pray.

Almighty God, in whom we live and move and have our being, look graciously upon the world which you have made and for which your Son gave his life, and especially on all whom you make to be one flesh in holy marriage. May their lives together be a sacrament of your love to this broken world, so that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy overcome despair.

People Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Leader May N and N so live together that the strength of their love may enrich our common life and become a sign of your faithfulness.

People Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

[Leader May they receive the gift and heritage of children and the grace to bring them up to know and love you.

People Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.]

Leader May their home be a place of truth, security, and love; and their lives an example of concern for others.

People Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Leader May those who have witnessed these vows find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed.

People Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Other suitable prayers may be used.

The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant Gathering our prayers and praises into one,
let us pray as our Saviour taught us,

All **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Or

Celebrant And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us,
we are bold to say,

All **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Blessing of the Marriage

The people remain standing. The husband and wife kneel, and the celebrant says one of the following prayers.

Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us, to be born of a human mother, and to make the way of the cross to be the way of life. We thank you, also, for consecrating the union of man and woman in his name. By the power of your Holy Spirit, pour out the abundance of your blessing upon this man and this woman. Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their life and in their death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that table where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever.

People

Amen.

Or

Celebrant

O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church. Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honour, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People

Amen.

The husband and wife still kneeling, the celebrant adds this blessing.

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that you may faithfully live together in this life, and in the age to come have life everlasting.

People **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The newly married couple may greet each other.

Readings and Psalms Suitable for Marriage Liturgies

Old Testament and New Testament Readings

Genesis 1.27–28,31a (God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them)

Tobit 8.5b–8 (Not . . . because of lust, but with sincerity)

Romans 12.1–2,9–13 (Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good)

1 Corinthians 13 (So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love)

Ephesians 3.14–19 (To comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ)

Colossians 3.12–17 (Put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony)

1 John 4.7–12 (If we love one another, God abides in us)

Psalms and Suitable Refrains

67 (May God be merciful to us and bless us)

112.1–6 (Happy are they who fear the Lord *or* Hallelujah!)

148.1–6 (Hallelujah!)

150 (Hallelujah!)

Gospel Readings

Matthew 5.1–10 (Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied)

Matthew 22.35–40 (You shall love the Lord your God . . . You shall love your
neighbour as yourself)

Mark 10.6–9 (The two shall become one flesh)

John 2.1–11 (On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee)

John 15.9–12 (This is my commandment, that you love one another)