

## THE ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY WITHOUT MASS

79. When Mass is not celebrated, either by necessity or because of circumstances, the order described here is used, even by a Deacon.

### The Introductory Rites

#### The First Form

80. At the appointed time, the Priest, wearing an alb or surplice, and a white or festive stole, and even a cope (or a dalmatic for a Deacon) of the same colour, goes with the servers to the door of the church, receives the couple to be married, and greets them kindly, showing that the Church shares in their joy.

81. The procession to the altar then takes place: the servers go first, the minister follows, and then the couple who, according to local custom, may be accompanied as a sign of honour by at least their parents and the two witnesses, to the place prepared for them. Meanwhile, the Entrance Chant takes place.

82. The minister 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

83. At the appointed time, the Priest, wearing an alb or surplice, a white or festive stole, and even a cope (or a dalmatic for a Deacon) of the same colour, goes with the servers to the place prepared for the couple.

84. When the couple have arrived at their place, the minister receives them and greets them kindly, showing that the Church shares in their joy.

85. Then the minister reverences the altar with a profound bow, venerates it with a kiss, and goes to the chair.

86. Then, after the Sign of the Cross has been made, he greets those present, saying:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Or some other suitable greeting, taken from *The Roman Missal*.

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

Or:

The Lord be with you.

All reply:

And with your spirit.

87. Then, in these or similar words, the minister 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.

88. **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.

89. **Then, with hands extended, he says this prayer:**

Be attentive to our prayers, O Lord, and in your kindness pour out your grace on these your servants (**N. and N.**), that, coming together before your altar, they may be confirmed in love for one another. Through Christ our Lord.

**R.** Amen.

**Or:**

Other prayers, nos. **223, 224, 226, 227, 228.**

O God, who consecrated the bond of Marriage 223\*  
by so great a mystery that in the wedding covenant you foreshadow the Sacrament of Christ and his Church, grant, we pray, to these your servants, that what they receive in faith they may live out in deeds. Through Christ our Lord.

**Or:**

O God, who in creating the human race 224  
willed that man and wife should be one, join, we pray, in a bond of inseparable love these your servants who are to be united in the covenant of Marriage, so that, as you make their love fruitful, they may become, by your grace, witnesses to charity itself. Through Christ our Lord.

**Or:**

Grant, we pray, almighty God, 226  
that these your servants, now to be joined by the Sacrament of Matrimony, may grow in the faith they profess and enrich your Church with faithful offspring. Through Christ our Lord.

Be attentive to our prayers, O Lord, and in your kindness uphold 227  
what you have established for the increase of the human race, so that the union you have created may be kept safe by your assistance. Through Christ our Lord.

**Or:**

O God, who since the beginning of the world have blessed the increase of offspring, 228  
show favour to our supplications and pour forth the help of your blessing on these your servants (**N. and N.**), so that in the union of Marriage they may be bound together in mutual affection, in likeness of mind, and in shared holiness. Through Christ our Lord.

### **The Liturgy of the Word**

90. **The Liturgy of the Word follows in the usual manner with texts taken from those provided above in no. 56 or with others from the readings indicated below (nos. 179-222).**

**At least one reading that explicitly speaks of Marriage must always be chosen.**

91. Then the minister 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 Marriage**

92. 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.

93. With all standing, including the couple and the witnesses, who are positioned near them, the minister 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**

94. The minister 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 minister 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**

**95. The minister invites them to declare their consent:**

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

**First he asks the bridegroom, inserting the full names:**

**N. N.**, do you freely and willingly take **N. N.** here present, for your lawful wife according to the laws of God and of holy Mother Church?

**The bridegroom answers:**

I do.

**Then he asks the bride, inserting the full names:**

**N. N.**, do you freely and willingly take **N. N.** here present, for your lawful husband according to the laws of God and of holy Mother Church?

**The bride answers:**

I do.

**96. The minister then says to the bridegroom and bride:**

**N. and N.**, join your right hands.

The couple face each other, and the bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his.

**Form A**

**The bridegroom says (or repeats after the minister):**

I, **N. N.**, take you, **N. 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; to love and to cherish, till death do us part.

**The bride says (or repeats after the minister):**

I, **N. N.**, take you, **N. 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; to love and to cherish, till death do us part.

**Or:**

**Form B**

**The bridegroom says (or repeats after the minister)**

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 (or repeats after the minister):**

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 Reception of the Consent**

98. Then, receiving their consent, the minister 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.

99. The minister 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**

100. The minister says:

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

**R.** Amen.

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

Bless, O Lord, these rings, 229  
which we bless ✠ in your name, so that those who wear them may remain entirely faithful to each other,  
abide in peace and in your will, and live always in mutual charity.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Or:**

Bless ✠ and sanctify your servants 230  
in their love, O Lord, and let these rings, a sign of their faithfulness, remind them of their love for one  
another.  
Through Christ our Lord.

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

101. 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.

**The husband may also hand (gold and) silver to his wife, saying:**

This (gold and) silver I give you, tokens of all my worldly goods.

**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.

102. Then a hymn or Canticle of praise may be sung by the whole community.

### **The Universal Prayer**

103. The Universal Prayer then takes place (examples are provided in Nos. 251-252):

a) first, the minister says the invitation to prayer;

b) the invocations of the Universal Prayer with the response of the faithful follow, but in such a way that the individual invocations should be consistent with the Nuptial Blessing, yet should not duplicate it;

c) if Holy Communion is not to be distributed, the Lord's Prayer follows;

d) then the concluding prayer is omitted and the minister invokes upon the bride and bridegroom God's blessing, which is never omitted.

### **The Nuptial Blessing**

104. The bride and bridegroom remain at their place and kneel. Then, the minister, with hands joined, continues:

Now let us humbly invoke God's blessing upon this bride and groom, that in his kindness he may favour with his help those on whom he has bestowed the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Other formulas, nos. 73, 241.

And all pray in silence for a while.

105. Then the minister, standing and turned towards the bride and bridegroom with hands extended over them, says the following prayer. 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.

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.

R. Amen.

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

106. Then, if Holy Communion is not to be distributed, the minister immediately blesses the people, saying:

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

R. Amen.

107. It is a praiseworthy practice to end the celebration with a suitable chant.

### **Holy Communion**

108. If Holy Communion is to be distributed, after the Nuptial Blessing, the minister approaches the place where the Eucharist is reserved, takes the vessel or ciborium with the Body of the Lord, places it on the altar, and genuflects.

109. Then, he introduces the Lord's Prayer:

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

And all continue together:

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.

110. After this, if appropriate, the minister invites the faithful:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Then the bride and bridegroom and all present offer one another a sign that expresses peace and charity.

111. When this has been completed, the minister genuflects, takes a host and, holding it slightly raised above the vessel or ciborium, while facing the communicants, says:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

The communicants say together:

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

112. After this, the minister approaches the communicants, raises a host slightly and shows it to each of them, saying:

The Body of Christ.

The communicant replies:

Amen.

And receives Holy Communion.

113. During the distribution of Communion, a suitable chant, if appropriate, may be sung.

114. When the distribution of Communion is over, if appropriate, sacred silence may be observed for a while, or a psalm or canticle of praise may be sung.

115. Then the minister says this prayer:

Let us pray.

Having been made partakers at your table, we pray, O Lord, that those who are united by the Sacrament of Marriage may always hold fast to you and proclaim your name to the world.

Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

### The Conclusion of the Celebration

116. The rite concludes with the blessing of the bride and bridegroom and the people, either with the simple form May almighty God bless you, or with one of the formulas provided below, nos. 248-250.

May God the eternal Father 248  
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.

R. Amen.

May you be blessed in your children, have solace in your friends and enjoy true peace with everyone.

R. 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.

R. 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.

R. Amen.

Or:

May God the all-powerful Father grant you his joy 249  
and bless you in your children.

R. Amen.

May the Only Begotten Son of God stand by you with compassion in good times and in bad.

R. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit of God always pour forth his love into your hearts.

R. Amen.

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

R. Amen.

Or:

May the Lord Jesus,  
who graced the marriage at Cana by his presence, bless you and your loved ones.  
**R.** Amen.

May he, who loved the Church to the end, unceasingly pour his love into your hearts.  
**R.** Amen.

May the Lord grant that, bearing witness to faith in his Resurrection, you may await with joy the blessed hope to come.  
**R.** Amen.

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

117. **When the celebration is concluded, the witnesses and the minister 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.**