

CHAPTER I

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 couple to be married, and greets them kindly, showing that the Church shares in their joy.

46. The procession to the altar then takes place: the servers go first, the Priest 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.

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 greets them kindly, 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.

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

Or:

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

Or:

The Lord be with you.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

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.

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen

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 Priest, with hands joined, says:

Let us pray.

And all pray in silence with the Priest for a while.
Then the Priest, with hands extended, says the Collect prayer. When the Mass is of The Roman Missal, Ritual Masses,
V. For the Celebration of Marriage, the options are as follows:

A

Be attentive to our prayers, O Lord, and in your kindness uphold
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 our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. 227

Or:

O God, who in creating the human race 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 our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. 224

B

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 our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. 225

Or:

O God, who consecrated the bond of Marriage 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 our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. 223†

C

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
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 our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. 226

Or:

O God, who since the beginning of the world have blessed the increase of offspring,
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 our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. 228

† This Collect (223) may not be used in the same celebration as the first Nuptial Blessing (nos. 74, 105).

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 FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Genesis

1 :26-28, 3 la

Male and female he created them.

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

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

R. O blessed are those who fear the Lord!

Or:

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.

O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!

By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper.

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table.

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.

May the Lord bless you from Sion
all the days of your life!

May you see your children's children.

THE SECOND READING

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

5:2a, 25-32

This mystery has many implications and I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.

Follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up in our place. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body - and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.
The word of the Lord.

THE ALLELUIA AND THE VERSE BEFORE THE GOSPEL

cf. Psalm 133 (134):3

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the Lord bless you from Sion, he who made both heaven and earth. Alleluia!

Or, during Lent:

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

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

God is love;

let us love one another as God has loved us.

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

THE GOSPEL

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

19:3-6

What God has united, man must not divide.

Some Pharisees approached Jesus, and to test him they said, 'Is it against the Law for a man to divorce his wife on any pretext whatever?' He answered, 'Have you not read that the creator from the beginning made them male and female and that he said: This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body? There are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.'

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 Marriage

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,
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 husband according to the laws of God and of holy Mother Church?

The bride answers:

I do.

62. The Priest 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 Priest):

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 Priest):

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 Priest):

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 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, let no one 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.
R. Amen.

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

Bless, O Lord, these rings, 229
which we bless ✠ lie 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.

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.

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.

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, saying:

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.
R. 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 the blessing.

When the Mass is of *The Roman Missal*, Ritual Masses,

V. For the Celebration of Marriage, the options are as follows:

A

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.
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:

Other formulas, nos. 249-250.

B

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

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

C

May the Lord Jesus, 250
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.

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.