

CHAPTER I

The Sacrament of Marriage at Mass

STRUCTURE OF THIS RITE

INTRODUCTORY RITES

- Entry Song and Procession
- Greeting and Welcome
- Penitential Rite
(Gloria)
- Opening Prayer

LITURGY OF THE WORD

- Two or three Readings, Psalm
- Homily

LITURGY OF MARRIAGE

- Address
- Examination
- The Consent
- Exchange of Ring or Rings
- General Intercessions
(Creed)
- (Completion of Documents)

LITURGY OF EUCHARIST

- Procession and Preparation of Gifts
- Prayer over the Gifts
- Wedding Preface
- Eucharistic Prayer
- Lord's Prayer
- Nuptial Blessing
- Sign of Peace
- Communion; Communion Song
- Prayer after Communion
(Completion of Documents)

CONCLUDING RITE

- Blessing and Dismissal

NUPTIAL MASS

The Sacrament of Marriage at Mass

- 20 This rite is used when both bride and groom are baptised Catholics. If requested, and according to the local Ordinary's decrees, the Mass may also be celebrated when one party though baptised, is not a catholic.

21 **INTRODUCTORY RITES**

At the appointed time, the priest, vested for Mass, goes with the ministers to the door of the church or, if more suitable, to the altar. There he greets the bride and bridegroom, showing them that the church shares their joy.

Where it is desirable that the rite of welcome be omitted, the celebration begins at once with the Mass (ICEL Missal p 766).

22 **ENTRY PROCESSION**

If there is a procession to the altar, the ministers go first, followed by the priest, then the bride and bridegroom. According to local custom, they may be escorted by at least their parents and the two witnesses. Meanwhile, the **entrance song** is sung (see Appendix A).

The bride and groom may be placed at the front, or on either side with their families. The priest goes to his seat to begin the Mass as in the Missal. The **Gloria** is usually sung or said, then the **opening prayer**.

23 **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

The liturgy of the word is celebrated according to the rubrics (see Introduction, n 11), as in the Lectionary (Chapman edition, page 910). There may be two or three readings, the first being from the Old Testament: in Paschaltide, the first should preferably be from Acts, the second from the Apocalypse and the gospel from St. John.

24 **HOMILY**

After the gospel, the priest gives a homily drawn from the sacred text. He speaks about the mystery of Christian marriage, the dignity of wedded love, the grace of the sacrament and the responsibilities of married people, keeping in mind the circumstances of this particular marriage

After the homily, the priest may invite the couple and the chief witnesses to come forward to the sanctuary, if they are not already there.

- 25 If two or more marriages are celebrated at the same time, the questioning before consent, the consent itself and the acceptance of consent shall be done individually for each couple; the rest, including the nuptial blessing, is said once for all, using the plural format.

26 LITURGY OF MARRIAGE

All stand, including the bride and bridegroom, and the priest addresses them in these or similar words

N and N (Christian names),
you have come together in this church
so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love.
Christ abundantly blesses this love.
He has already consecrated you by 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—
before me, its minister,
and with these your friends as witnesses—
I ask you to state your intentions
to live in lifelong fidelity to each other
and to God in whose image you have been made.

- 27 The priest then questions them about their freedom of choice, faithfulness to each other and the acceptance and upbringing of children:

I now ask you if you undertake the obligations of marriage, freely and deliberately.
N and N, are you ready,
freely and without reservation, to give yourselves to each other in marriage?

Each answers separately, first the bridegroom, then the bride:

I am.

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

Each answers:

I will.

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?

Each answers:

I will.

28 THE CONSENT

(At an appropriate part of the ceremony, according to local custom, the bride may be "given away" by a relative or close friend).

The priest invites the bride and bridegroom to declare their consent:

Since it is your intention to enter into marriage,
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.

29 The priest then says to the bridegroom and bride:

N and N, join your right hands.

The bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his and says (or repeats after the priest):

**Groom: 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
till death do us part.**

The bride says (or repeats after the priest):

**Bride: 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
till death do us part.**

30 **Having received their consent the priest says:**

You have declared your consent before the church.
May the Lord in his goodness
Strengthen your married love.

Then the priest declares to all present:

“What God has joined together,
Let no man put asunder.” (Matthew 19, 6)

All present reply: Amen

And the couple release their hands

31 BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF THE RING OR RING

The priest blesses the ring or rings, handed to him by the best man or a server.

- (a) May the Lord bless + this ring (these rings),
which you give (to each other)
as the sign of your love and fidelity.

R. Amen.

Or

- (b) Lord,
bless + and consecrate N and N (Christian names)
in their love for each other.
May this ring (these rings)
be a symbol of true faith in each other
and always remind them of their love.
(Grant this) through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen

Or (only when two rings are to be blessed);

- (c) 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.

R. Amen

He may sprinkle the rings with holy water.

The groom gives the ring to his wife, putting it on the fourth finger of her left hand, saying:

**Groom: With this ring I wed you,
in the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

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

**Groom: This gold and silver I give you,
tokens of all my worldly goods.**

If the bride gives a ring to her husband, she does so in the same manner, saying:

**Bride: With this ring I wed you,
in the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

The General Intercessions follow immediately,
The Creed, if to be said, follows afterwards.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS or
PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

- 32 One of the following examples, or parts of them, may be used, or other intentions, previously composed.

Example 1

Priest:

Now that we have all heard the Word of God and have witnessed this marriage, we renew our faith in the Lord's promises; let us place our needs and the needs of others before him.

Reader:

- 1 That all Christians may reflect God's love in their lives: so may they inspire all around them to joy, love and generosity -
Pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Other responses may be sung instead)

- 2 That our leaders in the Church and in our Country may do all they can to promote strong and stable family life –
- 3 For greater love and unity in all families, that we may be ready to help one another and willing to forgive –
- 4 For **N** and **N**, that they may be faithful to each other, enjoy the peace that comes from God and give true witness to their Christian faith –
- 5 For all married people, that the Holy Spirit will renew in them the grace of the sacrament –
- 6 For the whole human family: that all men and women may work together for peace and reconciliation –
- 7 That all our relatives and friends who have died (**..N..**) may be welcomed into the joy of Christ's kingdom –
- 8 Now we pause, to pray silently for our own special intentions.

After a silent pause for prayer, the priest concludes:

Father, you are the author of marriage
and so we pray for **N** and **N**
and for all the married.
May each day bring them closer to you;
and may they experience your love and peace:
through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen

Example 2

Priest:

Let us now pray to almighty God for the needs of us all, especially of **N** and **N** who are now husband and wife.

Reader:

- 1 That God's blessing, newly given to **N** and **N**, husband and wife, may inspire and sustain them at all times -
Pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

(Other responses may be sung instead)

- 2 For the grace to reflect on the joy and companionship offered in marriage –
Pray to the Lord.
- 3 For the wisdom to renew constantly the giving of each for the other which marks a wedding day –
- 4 For a renewal by God's Holy Spirit of the grace of this sacrament in all married people among us today –
- 5 That we may all in our own way bear witness to the holiness of the married state –
- 6 Now we pause to present our own petitions in silence.

After a silent pause for prayer, the priest concludes:

Holy Father, hear our prayer of faith.
Strengthen and uphold us
In your divine providence:
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen

- 33 **The Creed**, if prescribed or desired, is sung or said now.

DOCUMENTS

The documents may be completed now or just before the final blessing. The wedding group retire to the sacristy or other place, or to a table in the church. Meanwhile, the people may sing suitable hymns, or listen to appropriate music in a prayerful spirit. Then the wedding group return to their places, and the Mass continues.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

- 34 The Bride and groom should themselves take part in the offertory procession, presenting the gifts. During the procession and preparation of gifts, a hymn may be sung (see Appendix A).
- 35 **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**
In the proper Nuptial Mass, or when no other Preface is prescribed, one of the three Wedding Prefaces is said. In the Roman Canon, if said, there is a special form of “Father, accept...”
- 36 **THE NUPTIAL BLESSING** is given immediately after the Lord’s Prayer, as in the Missal, page 767 fol. The prayer to be used should be chosen beforehand, in consultation with the couple.
- 37 **SIGN OF PEACE**
It is appropriate for the new husband and wife, both their families and all present, to exchange a sign of peace.
- 38 **COMMUNION**
The newly married may receive communion in both kinds.

After the Prayer after communion, the documents are completed as noted above, if not already done.

Concluding Rite

88 After each rite of marriage, all kneel in their places. The priest, standing at his seat or in the centre, gives the blessing in the simple form or, if desired, in a solemn form. Then he gives the dismissal.

89 SOLEMN BLESSING

Priest: The Lord be with you. **R.** And also with you.
Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing
(or similar invitation)

He extends both hands over the couple and the people:

1 –God, the eternal Father,
keep you in love for each other,
so that the peace of Christ may stay with you
and be always in your home. **R.** Amen

–May (your children bless you)
your friends console you
and all men live in peace with you. **R.** Amen

–May you always bear witness to the love of God in this world;
so that the afflicted and the needy
will find in you generous friends
and welcome you into the joys of heaven. **R.** Amen

–And may almighty God bless you all:
+ the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **R.** Amen

2 –May God, the almighty Father,
Give you his joy
and bless you (in your children). **R.** Amen

–May the only Son of God have mercy on you
and help you in good times and in bad. **R.** Amen

–May the Holy Spirit of God
always fill your hearts with his love. **R.** Amen

–And may almighty God bless you all:
+ the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **R.** Amen

- 3 –May the Lord Jesus Christ,
who was a guest at the wedding in Cana,
bless you and your families and friends. R. Amen
- May Jesus, who loved his Church to the end,
Always fill your hearts with his love. R. Amen
- May he grant that,
as you believe in his resurrection,
So you may wait for him in joy and hope. R. Amen
- And may almighty God bless you all:
+ the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. R. Amen
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90

DISMISSAL

The priest dismisses the people in these or similar words:

Go in the peace of Christ

or Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

or Go out in the joy of Christ's Love.

or Go in gladness, live your lives in God's joy.

All reply: Thanks be to God.

And all depart, to the accompaniment, if desired, of a hymn or suitable joyful music.