

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 color 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 color 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.
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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 fulfill 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. 144–187). 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

Male and female he created them.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

1:26-28, 31a

Then God said:

“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea,

the birds of the air, and the cattle,

and over all the wild animals

and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.”

God created man in his image;

in the image of God he created him;

male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying:

“Be fertile and multiply;

fill the earth and subdue it.

**Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air,
and all the living things that move on the earth.”
God looked at everything he had made,
and he found it very good.**

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5ac and 6a

R⁷. (see 1a) Blessed are those who fear the Lord.

or:

R⁷. (4) See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

**Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
and walk in his ways!
By the labor of your hands you shall eat.
You will be blessed and prosper. R⁷.**

**Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive
around your table. R⁷.**

**Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the LORD.
May the LORD bless you from Zion
all the days of your life!
May you see your children’s children. R⁷.**

THE SECOND READING

This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

5:2a, 25-32

**Brothers and sisters:
Live in love, as Christ loved us
and handed himself over for us.**

**Husbands, love your wives,
even as Christ loved the Church**

and handed himself over for her to sanctify her,
 cleansing her by the bath of water with the word,
 that he might present to himself the Church
 in splendor,
 without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,
 that she might be holy and without blemish.
 So also husbands should love their wives
 as their own bodies.

He who loves his wife loves himself.
 For no one hates his own flesh
 but rather nourishes and cherishes it,
 even as Christ does the Church,
 because we are members of his Body.

*For this reason a man shall leave his father
 and his mother
 and be joined to his wife,
 and the two shall become one flesh.*

This is a great mystery,
 but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church.
 The word of the Lord.

THE ALLELUIA AND THE VERSE BEFORE THE GOSPEL

Psalm 134:3

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

May the LORD bless you from Zion,
 he who made both heaven and earth. **R**.

Or, during Lent:

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

R. (Psalm 81:2) Sing joyfully to God our strength.

God is love.

Let us love one another, as God has loved us. **R**.

THE GOSPEL

What God has united, man must not separate.

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

19:3-6

Some Pharisees approached Jesus, and tested him, saying,
 “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife
 for any cause whatever?”

He said in reply, “Have you not read that
 from the beginning
 the Creator *made them male and female* and said,
*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother
 and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become
 one flesh?*

So they are no longer two, but one flesh.
 Therefore, what God has joined together,
 man must not separate.”

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 honor 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 honor 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 honor 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,
to love and to cherish
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,
to love and to cherish
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, he 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 honor 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 honor him
all the days of your life?**

The bride replies:

I do.

The following alternative form may be used:

First, he asks the bridegroom:

**N., do you take N. for your 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
until death do you part?**

The bridegroom replies:

I do.

Next, the Priest asks the bride:

**N., do you take N. for your 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
until death do you part?**

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 fulfillment 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.**

R. Amen.

Other formulas for blessing the rings, nos. 194–195.

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

67A. 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.

THE BLESSING AND GIVING OF THE *ARRAS*

67B. If the occasion so suggests, the rite of blessing and giving of the *arras* (coins) may take place following the blessing and giving of rings.

The Priest says:

**Bless, † O Lord, these *arras*
that **N.** and **N.** will give to each other
and pour over them the abundance of your good gifts.**

The husband takes the *arras* and hands them over to his wife, saying:

N., receive these *arras* as a pledge of God's blessing
and a sign of the good gifts we will share.

The wife takes the *arras* and hands them over to the husband, saying:

N., receive these *arras* as a pledge of God's blessing and a sign of the good gifts we will share.

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. 216–217).

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.

71A. A commemoration of the husband and wife in the Eucharistic Prayer is made with a formula provided in nos. 202–204.

THE BLESSING AND PLACING OF THE LAZO OR THE VEIL

71B. According to local customs, the rite of blessing and imposition of the *lazo* (wedding garland) or of the veil may take place before the Nuptial Blessing. The spouses remain kneeling in their place. If the *lazo* has not been placed earlier, and it is now convenient to do so, it may be placed at this time, or else, a veil is placed over the head of the wife and the shoulders of the husband, thus symbolizing the bond that unites them.

The Priest says:

**Bless, ✠ O Lord, this *lazo* (or: this veil),
a symbol of the indissoluble union
that **N.** and **N.** have established from this day forward
before you and with your help.**

The *lazo* (or the veil) is held by two family members or friends and is placed over the shoulders of the newly married couple.

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.**

Text with music, no. 205A.

Other formulas, nos. 104, 206, 208.

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 favor 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 honor
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.

Text with music, no. 205B.

Other formulas for the Nuptial Blessing, nos. 207, 209.

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.**

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.

Other formulas, nos. 214–215.

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.