

The Marriage

The Purpose of Marriage

We have come together in the presence of God to witness the marriage of [groom] and [bride], to ask his blessing on them, and to share in their joy. Our Lord Jesus Christ was himself a guest at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and through his Spirit he is with us now.

The Scriptures teach us that marriage is a gift of God in creation and a means of his grace, a holy mystery 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 throughout their lives, they should be united in that love as Christ is united with his Church.

Marriage is given that husband and wife may comfort and help each other, living faithfully together in need and in plenty, in sorrow and in joy. It is given that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love, and, through the joy of their bodily union, may strengthen the union of their hearts and lives. It is given that they may have children and be blessed in caring for them and bringing them up in accordance with God's will, to his praise and glory.

In marriage husband and wife belong to one another, and they begin a new life together in the community. It is a way of life that all should honor; and must not be undertaken carelessly, lightly, or selfishly, but reverently, responsibly, in the fear of God, and after serious thought.

This is the way of life, created and hallowed by God, that [groom] and [bride] are now to begin. They will each give their consent to the other; they will join hands and exchange solemn vows, and in token of this they will each give and receive a ring.

Therefore, on this their wedding day we pray with them that, strengthened and guided by God, they may fulfil his purpose for the whole of their earthly life together.

The Declaration of No Impediment

As [groom] and [bride] are about to make their vows, I must first ask anyone present who knows any reason why they may not lawfully marry to declare it now.

[Groom] and [bride], the vows you are about to take are to be made before God, who is the judge of all and who knows all the secrets of our hearts. Therefore if either of you knows any reason why you may not marry, you must declare it now.

[The following paragraph repeated a line at a time by the groom, and then by the bride.]

**I do solemnly declare
that I know not
of any lawful impediment
why I, [N],
may not be joined in matrimony
to [N].**

The Declaration of Consent

[The following question is addressed to, and answered by, the groom.]

[Groom], will you take [bride] to be your wife? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and protect her, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

I will.

[The following question is addressed to, and answered by, the bride.]

[Bride], will you take [groom] to be your husband? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and obey him, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

I will.

The Giving Away

[The following question is normally answered by the father of the bride. If for any reason this is not possible, please ask for guidance.]

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

I do.

The Marriage Vows

[The following paragraph is repeated a line at a time by the groom.]

**I, [groom],
take you, [bride],
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, cherish, and protect,
till death us do part,
according to God's holy law;
and this is my solemn vow.**

[The following paragraph is repeated a line at a time by the bride.]

**I, [bride],
take you, [groom],
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, cherish, and obey,
till death us do part,
according to God's holy law;
and this is my solemn vow.**

The Exchanging of Rings

[The following paragraph is repeated a line at a time by the groom, and then by the bride.]

**I give you this ring
as a sign of our marriage.
With my body I honor you,
all that I am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

The Declaration of Marriage

Since [groom] and [bride] have declared in the presence of God and this congregation that they will live together in Christian marriage; since they have made their promises to each other; and since they have declared their marriage by joining hands and by giving and receiving rings; I therefore pronounce them husband and wife in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together, let no one divide.

[Groom], you may kiss your bride.