

THE FORM OF SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY

Introduction

The priest says to the congregation

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this congregation, to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony; which is an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence, and first miracle that he wrought, in Cana of Galilee; and is commended in Holy Scripture to be honourable among all men: and therefore is not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in hand, unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God; duly considering the causes for which matrimony was ordained:

First, for the increase of mankind, according to the will of God, and for the due ordering of families and households, that children might be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy Name;

Secondly, for the hallowing of the union betwixt man and woman, and for the avoidance of sin;

Thirdly, for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

Into which holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. Therefore if any man can shew any just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace.

The minister says to the couple

I require and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any impediment, why ye may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured, that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's Word doth allow are not joined together by God; neither is their matrimony lawful.

The Marriage

THE CONSENT

The minister says to the man

.... Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and keep her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

I will.

The minister says to the woman

.... Wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love him, honour, and keep him, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?

I will.

Or the minister may say to the woman

.... Wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou obey him and serve him, love, honour, and keep him, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?

I will.

The minister asks

Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?

The minister receives the woman at her father's or friend's hands.

THE MARRIAGE VOWS

The man, with his right hand taking the woman by her right hand, says after the minister

I take thee to my wedded 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 us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth.

The woman, with her right hand taking the man by his right hand, says after the minister

I take thee to my wedded 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 us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth.

Or the woman, with her right hand taking the man by his right hand, says after the minister

I take thee to my wedded 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 to obey, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth.

GIVING AND RECEIVING OF A RING

The man gives to the woman a ring, laying it on the book.

The man puts the ring on the fourth finger of the woman's left hand and, holding the ring there, says

With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

If the woman gives the man a ring, she puts the ring on the fourth finger of the man's left hand and, holding the ring there, says

With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER

The man and the woman kneel. The priest says

Let us pray.

O eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life; Send thy blessing upon these thy servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in thy Name; that, as Isaac and Rebecca lived faithfully together, so these persons may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant betwixt them made (whereof this

ring given and received is a token and pledge), and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Joining their right hands together, the priest says

Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

DECLARATION

The minister speaks to the people

Forasmuch as and have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have given and pledged their troth either to other, and have declared the same by giving and receiving of a ring, and by joining of hands; I pronounce that they be man and wife together: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The minister adds this Blessing:

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you; and so fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. **Amen.**

PRAYERS AFTER THE MARRIAGE

The minister goes to the Lord's Table.

One of the following Psalms (or a Psalm from the list on page 418) is said or sung.

THE PSALM

Psalm 128 Beati omnes

- 1 Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, ■
and walk in his ways.
- 2 For thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands; ■
O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.
- 3 Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine ■
upon the walls of thine house.
- 4 Thy children like the olive-branches ■
round about thy table.

- 5 Lo, thus shall the man be blessed ■
that feareth the Lord.
- 6 The Lord from out of Sion shall so bless thee ■
that thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long.
- 7 Yea, that thou shalt see thy children's children ■
and peace upon Israel.
- Glory be to the Father, ■
and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, ■
is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

or Psalm 67 Deus misereatur

- 1 God be merciful unto us, and bless us; ■
and shew us the light of his countenance,
and be merciful unto us:
- 2 That thy way may be known upon earth, ■
thy saving health among all nations.
- 3 Let the people praise thee, O God; ■
yea, let all the people praise thee.
- 4 O let the nations rejoice and be glad, ■
for thou shalt judge the folk righteously,
and govern the nations upon earth.
- 5 Let the people praise thee, O God; ■
yea, let all the people praise thee.
- 6 Then shall the earth bring forth her increase, ■
and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing.
- 7 God shall bless us, ■
and all the ends of the world shall fear him.
- Glory be to the Father, ■
and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, ■
is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The man and the woman kneel before the Lord's Table, the minister says

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

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. Amen.

O Lord, save thy servant, and thy handmaid,
who put their trust in thee.

O Lord, send them help from thy holy place;
and evermore defend them.

Be unto them a tower of strength;
from the face of their enemy.

O Lord, hear our prayer;
and let our cry come unto thee.

The minister says

O God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless these thy servants, and sow the seed of eternal life in their hearts; that whatsoever in thy holy Word they shall profitably learn, they may in deed fulfil the same. Look, O Lord, mercifully upon them from heaven, and bless them. And as thou didst send thy blessing upon Abraham and Sarah, to their great comfort, so vouchsafe to send thy blessing upon these thy servants; that they obeying thy will, and alway being in safety under thy protection, may abide in thy love unto their lives' end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

This prayer may follow:

O merciful Lord and heavenly Father, by whose gracious blessing mankind is increased; Bestow, we beseech thee, on these thy servants the heritage and gift of children, and grant that they may also live together so long in godly love and honesty, that they may see their children christianly and virtuously brought up, to thy praise and honour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O God, who by thy mighty power hast made all things of nothing; who also (after other things set in order) didst appoint, that out of man (created after thine own image and similitude) woman should take her beginning; and, knitting them together, didst teach that it should never be lawful to put asunder those whom thou by Matrimony hadst made one: O God, who hast so consecrated the state of Matrimony, that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity betwixt Christ and his Church: Look mercifully upon these thy servants, that both this man may love his wife, according to thy Word (as Christ did love his spouse the Church, who gave himself for it, loving and cherishing it even as his own flesh), and also that this woman may be loving and amiable, faithful and obedient to her husband; and in all quietness, sobriety, and peace, be a follower of holy and godly matrons. O Lord, bless them both, and grant them to inherit thy everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers from those on pages 424-427 may be preferred.

The minister says

Almighty God, who at the beginning did create our first parents, Adam and Eve, and did sanctify and join them together in marriage; Pour upon you the riches of his grace, sanctify and bless you, that ye may please him both in body and soul, and live together in holy love unto your lives' end. **Amen.**

Unless there is to be a celebration of the Holy Communion a reading from Holy Scripture follows. If there is a sermon it is preached here.

Here may follow an anthem or hymn.

If there is no Communion, the minister says

Let us pray.

O eternal God, we humbly beseech thee favourably to behold these thy servants and now joined in wedlock according to thy holy ordinance; and grant that they, seeking first thy kingdom and righteousness, may obtain the manifold blessings of thy grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O almighty Lord, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

It is appropriate that the newly married couple should receive the Holy Communion at the time of their Marriage, or at the first opportunity after their Marriage.

Holy Communion at the Time of a Marriage

THE COLLECT

O eternal God, we humbly beseech thee favourably to behold these thy servants now joined in wedlock according to thy holy ordinance; and grant that they, seeking first thy kingdom and righteousness, may obtain the manifold blessings of thy grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE EPISTLE

Ephesians 5: 20-33

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ; so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself: for no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife; and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 19: 4-6

Jesus said, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Or readings from the list on page 418 may be preferred.