

MARRIAGE IN CHRIST

How beautiful, then,
is the marriage of two Christians,
two who are one in hope,
one in desire,
one in the way of life they follow,
one in the faith. . . .

Nothing divides them,
either in flesh or in spirit. . . .

Hearing and seeing this,
Christ rejoices.
To such as these
he gives his peace.

—Tertullian (160–220 AD),
in a letter to his wife

MARRIAGE IN CHRIST

THE ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY WITHIN MASS

according to texts approved by
the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
and confirmed by the Apostolic See

Third Edition



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GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING COMMUNION

FOR CATHOLICS

As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

FOR OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS

We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 §4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of Communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 §3).

FOR THOSE NOT RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

FOR NON-CHRISTIANS

We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

TO THE BRIDE AND GROOM

The first setting in which faith enlightens the human city is the family. I think first and foremost of the stable union of man and woman in marriage. This union is born of their love, as a sign and presence of God's own love, and of the acknowledgment and acceptance of the goodness of sexual differentiation, whereby spouses can become one flesh . . . and are enabled to give birth to a new life, a manifestation of the Creator's goodness, wisdom and loving plan. Grounded in this love, a man and a woman can promise each other mutual love in a gesture which engages their entire lives and mirrors many features of faith. Promising love for ever is possible when we perceive a plan bigger than our own ideas and undertakings, a plan which sustains us and enables us to surrender our future entirely to the one we love.

—Pope Francis, encyclical letter on faith (*Lumen Fidei*) 52

MARRIAGE IN CHRIST

The Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass

Options are indicated by A, B, C, etc., in the margin wherever they occur. Hymns, antiphons, and other sung texts as selected.

The Introductory Rites

ENTRANCE CHANT

Joined together as Christ's people, we open the celebration by raising our voices in praise of God who is present among us. This chant should deepen our unity as it introduces the Mass we celebrate today.

If there is no singing, one of the following antiphons may be recited:

A

May the Lord send you help from the holy place
and give you support from Sion.
May he grant you your hearts' desire
and fulfill every one of your designs. (Easter Time: Alleluia.)

B

At dawn, O Lord, fill us with your merciful love,
and we shall exult and rejoice all our days.
Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us
and upon the work of our hands. (Easter Time: Alleluia.)

C

I will bless you day after day, O Lord,
and praise your name for ever and ever,
for you are kind to all
and compassionate to all your creatures. (Easter Time: Alleluia.)

After the entrance chant or antiphon, all make the sign of the cross:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

GREETING

The priest welcomes us in the name of the Lord. We show our union with God, our neighbor, and the priest by a united response to his greeting.

A

Priest:

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

People:

And with your spirit.

B

Priest:

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

People:

And with your spirit.

C

Priest:

The Lord be with you.

People:

And with your spirit.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

As the church assembled in the Spirit, we praise and pray to the Father and the Lamb.

Priest and people:

**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.

COLLECT

The priest invites us to pray silently for a moment and then, in our name, expresses the theme of that day's celebration and petitions God the Father through the mediation of Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Priest:

Let us pray.

One of the following prayers is offered:

A

Priest:

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.

People:

Amen.

B

Priest:

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.

People:

Amen.

C

Priest:

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.

People:

Amen.

D

Priest:

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.

People:

Amen.

E

Priest:

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.

People:

Amen.

F

Priest:

O God, who since the beginning of the world
have blessed the increase of offspring,
show favor 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.

People:

Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The proclamation of God's Word is always centered in Christ, present through his Word. Old Testament writings prepare for him; New Testament books speak of him directly. All of Scripture calls us to believe once more and to follow Christ. After the reading we reflect upon God's words and respond to them.

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. For Old Testament readings, see page 48; for New Testament readings, page 56; for Gospel readings, page 72.

FIRST READING

To indicate the end:

Reader:

The word of the Lord.

People:

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

For Responsorial Psalms, see page 67.

SECOND READING

To indicate the end:

Reader:

The word of the Lord.