

YOUR WEDDING  
AT  
THE CHURCH OF  
THE SACRED HEART  
OF JESUS,  
CATERHAM



# PRACTICAL DETAILS

## BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE:

**T**HERE is a document that you will need to obtain as soon as you can: there should not be too much problem with this.

For Catholics, this certificate *must be a new one*, obtained from the church where you were baptized not longer than six months before the wedding. All Catholic churches are accustomed to providing these certificates, and normally do not charge, though they appreciate the use of a stamped, self-addressed envelope. For non-Catholics, an old certificate (such as the fancy one given on the day of baptism) will do fine. You should be aware that the Church of England make a charge for a certificate, and may be puzzled by the request. The Church of Scotland are usually even more puzzled!

If you have not been baptized, then this is the time to tell the priest or deacon. In itself this is not usually a problem, but the priest or deacon will need to contact the bishop to get permission (which is routinely granted without difficulty).

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

**B**ECAUSE of the pressures that marriage and family life is under these days, and also because of the high rate of marital breakdown, we want to make sure that your marriage has the very best possible chance of success. Therefore, before getting married, you must attend a marriage preparation course. There is usually a course each autumn and spring in Redhill, normally spread over four evenings. Couples who have been on this course have been very positive about it afterwards, so although it may seem a nuisance (yet another hoop to jump through!) at the time, it is very much worth your while. You will receive a certificate at the end which will be included in your marriage papers which we will prepare together. If you are doing your preparation and papers in another parish, the priest there will advise about preparation.

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

**A** MARRIAGE is, of course a sacrament, a matter between you and God. Therefore it is necessary to prepare to receive it well. Grace is given in this sacrament to help you to live the married life together happily and fruitfully, and in order to be able to receive this help you need to be in what we call a 'state of grace'. That means, basically, having been to Confession and Holy Communion recently and without any unconfessed grave sins on your conscience. So, Catholic parties should make sure to go to Confession (to any Catholic priest) shortly before the wedding, and I would counsel non-Catholics to take similar spiritual recourse from their own pastors. Besides this, there is prayer and attendance at Mass on Sundays—all these things will really help you get into focus and will unquestionably help your marriage.

## THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

**T**HIS needs to take place shortly before the wedding: ideally the night before. It is quite important to have the following present:

Bride,  
Groom,  
Best Man,  
Bride's Father (or whoever will 'give the bride away')  
Bridesmaids (or at least the chief bridesmaid)  
and at least one usher.

Your readers may also like to come and see where they are reading (even practise), and your parents might enjoy being there, too.

## BRIDESMAIDS AND BEST MEN

**Y**OU may choose whomever you wish to be bridesmaids and best men (and yes, you can have more than one). In this case you must identify a chief bridesmaid (or 'maid/matron of honour') and a chief best man; these should be adults as they have real responsibilities. The Best Man is usually the most nervous person at a wedding, because it is his responsibility to make sure things run smoothly. All fees and offerings should be entrusted to the Best Man to distribute in separate envelopes before the wedding ceremony (he will have too much on his mind afterwards, with the photographs &c). The rehearsal is often a good opportunity to see to this. The Best Man also takes charge of the ring(s), and looks after the Groom during the ceremony, handing him his order of service or hymnbook, and keeping him calm. A clean spare handkerchief is a good idea too, just in case.....

The Chief Bridesmaid's principal duty is to look after the bride. She will take the bride's bouquet at the altar, bring it with her to the signing of the register, and return it to her at the end. During the ceremony, she looks after the bride, helping her to sit, arranging her dress, and handing her anything she needs. As in the case of the Best Man, a clean spare hanky is a good idea. Should the bride have a train to her dress, the Chief Bridesmaid is essential to helping the bride turn.

Other bridesmaids, pageboys &c are in the care of the Chief Bridesmaid. It is inadvisable to use children under, say, four, simply because it will become very difficult shepherding them around or comforting them if they get distressed, or rescuing them if they wander off or get distracted.

Bridesmaids' (and Bride's!) dresses must be decent (no very short skirts or very plunging necklines): there is no restriction as to colour, though tradition suggests that pure white be reserved for virgins.

## USHERS AND SEATING

**Y**OU need one good sensible man or woman as a head usher, plus others. This is not a job for children. He (simply because it is usually a he) needs to identify the buttonholes and who gets them, make sure the orders of service have arrived, and make sure

that the priest or deacon has at least five copies of the order of service for the ceremony. He must discover where the looses are, and needs to work out how to open and close the double doors of the church to allow the bridal procession to enter and leave. He also needs to make himself responsible for parking, ensuring that the spaces directly in front of the church are left free for the bridal car etc. If there is to be a Nuptial Mass, then the chief usher (or another) may also need to do some furniture removals.

It is traditional that the family of the groom sits on the right hand side of the church and that of the bride on the left. This is entirely up to you, however; there is no necessity to reserve seat at all. What is important is that the front seats on the right must be reserved for the groom, best man, and his parents. On the other side, plenty of space must be reserved for the bridesmaids in the front rows, and for the bride's parents in the row behind. The ushers must make sure that people know where they are to go.

## **WITNESSES**

**Y**OU must have two principal witnesses to your wedding. These will sign the register with you during the wedding ceremony. It is traditional (but not necessary) that these witnesses be the best man and the chief bridesmaid (maid of honour).

## **BEFORE THE CEREMONY**

**I**T is supposedly traditional that the bride arrive late. A decorous five minutes' lateness is acceptable; if everyone is kept very late, then you may find that musicians, photographers, clergy &c may have to leave for other engagements, which would spoil your ceremony. It is customary (though not required) that the bride's mother wait in the porch until the bride arrives. When ready, she then makes an entrance, escorted by the bride's brother (if she has one), which lets the congregation know that the bride has arrived.

## **WALKING DOWN THE AISLE!**

**B**ROADLY speaking, there are three ways to do this; the traditional British way, the American way and the hybrid way. You should think in advance about how you want it to happen.

- The British way: the procession is led by the bride and her father (or another relative, usually—but not necessarily—a male). A maid of honour walks immediately behind and is followed by bridesmaids.
- The American way: there are several 'groomsmen' and maids of honour, who go down the aisle two and two before the bride. The groom waits alone at the altar.
- The hybrid way: bridesmaids and maids of honour go down the aisle before the bride; the best man waits with the groom at the altar.

I have been doing weddings for many years now, and can confidently state that the British traditional way works best, especially if the bridesmaids are very small. It is very easy for them to follow on, but if they have to find their own way, they can become lost and distressed very easily. The build-up of little bodies at the altar end can also be awkward,

because the bride and her father will have to fight their way through afterwards. The solution is to send them into pews straight away, which means that then they won't be attending on the bride. I am happy to go with whatever you want, but I counsel the traditional British way.

## READERS

**I**T is really important that your readers can read confidently and fluently in public. So please don't ask somebody simply because you want them to have a job, but make sure that they are used to speaking in public (teachers are often a good bet). You will need at least two readers, to read the first reading and psalm, and to read the bidding prayers (though at a pinch, the same person could do everything).

## WHAT YOU WILL HAVE TO SAY AT THE CEREMONY

**T**HE words that are used in the marriage ceremony are fixed by the laws of England, and they are regarded as being very important. So here they are, in case you would like to practise them in the secrecy of your own home. In the ceremony, you can either repeat them after the priest or read them. You can learn them by heart if you like, but remember that in the heat of the moment, your memory may fail you!

1. I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, *Frederick Wayne Bloggs or Mary Tabitha Smith* may not be joined in matrimony to *Mary Tabitha Smith or Frederick Wayne Bloggs*.

2. I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, *Mary Tabitha Smith or Frederick Wayne Bloggs* do take thee, *Frederick Wayne Bloggs or Mary Tabitha Smith* to be my lawful wedded husband/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 do us part.

n.b. (i) Nobody 'obeys' anyone else

(ii) till death *do us* part, not till death *us do* part, (a TV programme).

3. I give you this ring as a sign of our marriage: with my body I honour you, all that I am I give to you, and all that I have I share with you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

## FLOWERS

Our own parish flower team do not usually take on large-scale arrangements, so please would you find a florist yourselves. Please leave us some flowers behind after the wedding, otherwise we will have none for Sunday, having left space for yours! Do, by all means, take away pew ends, however, which, by the way, must not be secured with drawing pins or sellotape, which would damage the pews.

## MUSIC

Please check with the priest before firmly deciding this.

Organist: William Higgins: 01883 347813

- Choice of music: broadly speaking, please keep non-religious music for the reception. However, it's okay for the bride to come in or the newly-weds to walk out to some special music you have in mind, even if it isn't religious; it just mustn't be obviously unsuitable for a church. There is also an opportunity for something non-religious when you are signing the register, again, as long as it is suitable. If in doubt, have a word with Fr Seán.
- At a wedding without Mass, there is an opportunity for a hymn at the beginning, and when we go to sign the register. A hymn-version of a psalm (such as The Lord's my Shepherd) can substitute for the Responsorial Psalm. So that's two, plus a possible psalm. At a wedding Mass, there can be hymns at the beginning, (the psalm), the registration, the offertory, Communion, and at the end, though it is usually better just to end with the going-out music. You need not have hymns at all, nor need you fill all these slots. Especially if you have an organist, he or she can play instead.
- A note about copyright: Within an act of worship (including weddings) no licence is required for any live music that takes place or sound recordings played; this includes secular or Christian music. Authorised hymns can be reprinted (in your order of service) under the church copyright—the correct form of words is noted in the service section. Our parish secretary can confirm whether your hymns are authorised—broadly speaking, if they are in our parish hymn books there shouldn't be a problem. *If you are planning to video the wedding*, please see below, however, in the Videos section, because there is an important difference concerning licensing.

## CHOIR:

WE have a parish choir, who may by negotiation be prepared to come and sing at your wedding. Please speak to our Director of Music, Shona Fenion either at the 10.45 Mass on Sunday or else email [music@sacred-heart.co.uk](mailto:music@sacred-heart.co.uk).

## PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS:

It is usually possible to hire professional singers; soloists, vocal quartets or larger groups. Please speak to Fr Seán, who has some contacts. Shona Fenion, the Director of Music, has choral contacts too, and also instrumental contacts if you would like to hire a quartet, a wind band or other musicians.

## THE REGISTRATION:

THE wedding will be registered by a Registered Person, at present either Elizabeth Hubbard-Brown or Marion Copley. You need to go to the registry office to notify them of your intent to marry; you can do this up to a year before the ceremony, but no less than 15 days before. Reigate insist that you make an appointment first. You must have lived for at least seven days in the registration district where you register prior to your registration; if you move after this, it does not matter. If you live in two different registration districts, you must obtain two certificates from each local office, wherever that is. You will need to take along your passport, birth certificate, and any name-change documents if applicable. If you have had an annulment of a previous marriage, you will need to bring your divorce certificate; and, if widowed, the death certificate of your previous spouse. Photocopies, by the way, will not do. Your details will be taken, and then you will be asked to return in 15 days to pick up your blue certificate, which you should give to the priest as soon as possible.

- Please don't forget the registrar business; *you cannot be married without the blue certificate*. Usually once you have notified the registrar, you will be asked to return to collect the certificate or certificates.
- If you live in two different registration districts, you will need to go to two registry offices.
- They will charge you £35 each.

### Registration Office:

Reigate Registrars Office  
Reigate Library  
Bancroft Road  
Reigate  
Surrey

RH2 7RP

Tel. 0300 200 1002

*email:* [registration.leatherhead@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:registration.leatherhead@surreycc.gov.uk)

*(yes, Leatherhead — don't ask me why!)*

## FEES

UNLESS you want to sort this out beforehand, it's best to put all fees into envelopes and give them to the best man to distribute at the rehearsal or before the ceremony (after the ceremony there tends to be too much to do with photographs &c). Cash is the best way to do this, unless you know the names of all the recipients, in which case personal cheques would work fine.

- Registration fee: for the registered person who will prepare the books and witness the vows, and supervise the signing. £60.
- Organist: this needs to be agreed with the individual musician in advance. The fee is usually in the region of £100.
- Offering to the priest or deacon who prepares you and celebrates the wedding. We do not charge for the sacraments, so there is no set sum for this, but the clergy rely on such offerings for their income. As a guide, bear in mind that the priest or deacon has probably spent at least six hours preparing and celebrating your wedding, which is probably more than, say, the photographer.
- If you are not a parishioner or a regular worshipper at the Sacred Heart Church, there will be a charge of £250, payable at booking, towards the parish for the use of the building, grounds and facilities.
- In case of financial hardship, please speak with the priest discreetly.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

A GOOD photographer is a great blessing and a professional will know what to do without being told. The first point is that, yes, you can take as many photographs as you like. However, your photographer must not interfere with the ceremony in any way, or enter the sanctuary (the altar area), or directly in front of the altar where the actual marriage will take place. If using flash, he or she must be restrained about photographs as they will distract bride, groom and clergy from the important business being transacted. I understand that it is illegal, for some arcane reason (the Government's rules, not the Church's), to photograph the actual signing of the register. For this purpose, it is customary to pose a signing afterwards.

Videos are a tricky area of law. Because they are recording music, it is *actually necessary that you personally obtain a licence*. Apparently this is also required even for filming on a mobile phone! You can obtain a licence online from [www.prsformusic.com/lm](http://www.prsformusic.com/lm) or call 0207 580 5544. You must show this licence to Fr Seán together with a photocopy for him to put in the records before the wedding.

There is no objection *per se* to videos, but they must not roam around, but be discreet and stay (more or less) in one place. Fr Seán will already have a neck microphone, and is not prepared to wear a second—please make this clear to your video technician. If the groom (and/or bride) are happy to do so, that is up to them.

Photographers may care to know that I encourage bride and groom at the end of the ceremony to stand together in front of the altar a little while before walking down

the aisle. This gives them a very good opportunity for a special picture of both bride and groom with the church behind them.

## **CONFETTI**

**Y**ES, a little confetti is allowed, *provided that it is biodegradable*, and that it is not thrown inside the church, or allowed to blow inside. And, please, not *too* much of it!

# YOUR ORDER OF SERVICE

The best sorts of orders of service have everything that a congregation needs to take a full part in the ceremony. If you have the key items of information, your guests (many of whom may be unfamiliar with churches) will not need to juggle with a sheet, a hymn book, and a service book. Here are the texts you need, and *please don't leave any of them out* even to save space! Fr Seán has the texts on his computer, and is very willing to email them to you to save retyping, if you ask him by email. Remember that if you use modern music, there may be copyright issues.

# ORDER OF SERVICE FOR A WEDDING WHEN ONE PARTY HAS NOT BEEN BAPTIZED

## BRIDE'S ENTRANCE

*(Whatever music you choose e.g. Richard Wagner: Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin)*

All stand

Hymn:

*Print out the words for the first hymn (if you would like one) here.*

The priest says a few words of introduction, then we all sit.

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First reading

*(Scriptural quotation: e.g. 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13)*

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm

The response repeated between each verse is:

(e.g.) The Lord fills the earth with his love

*(or if you choose to have a hymn instead, print it in full, titled 'Hymn' instead of 'Responsorial Psalm')*

*If there is a second reading, lay it out like the first, with the same ending; this is the word of the Lord &c*

All stand to greet the gospel:

All: **Alleluia, alleluia! God is love; let us love one another as God has loved us. Alleluia!**

The Gospel

*(Scripture reference goes here)*

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Priest: A reading from the holy Gospel according to (Matthew, or whoever)

All: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

At the end of the Gospel:

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Please sit for the homily

### THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

The priest first questions the couple regarding their proper intentions, and they declare before all that they are freely and willingly marrying each other.

They then exchange their vows, for which all please stand.

Finally, the priest says

Priest: What God joins together, let no one put asunder!

Let us bless the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

The couple then exchange rings as a sign of their new status.

### THE BIDDING PRAYERS

Each short prayer ends ... we pray to the Lord.

Everyone responds: **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

We also say the Hail Mary:

**Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

After another prayer, we say together the Our Father:

**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.**

NUPTIAL BLESSING

The newly-weds kneel.

The blessing ends with the priest saying  
The Lord be with you.  
All respond: **And with your spirit.**

The priest reads three more prayers, after each of which we answer **Amen.**

He then blesses everyone:  
And may Almighty God bless all of you who are gathered here;  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.  
All answer **Amen.**

The newly-weds, their families, the best man and bride's assistants  
now go to sign the civil register.

Hymn:  
*Print out the words for the first hymn (if you would like one) here.  
Or any other music or readings you have chosen.*

PROCESSION OF BRIDE AND GROOM FROM THE CHURCH

*Wedding March, Felix Mendelssohn (or whatever)*

*N.b.: You must add on this copyright information at the end:*

- Excerpts from the English translation of the Rite of Marriage © 2013, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved.
- Excerpts from the English translation and chants of The Roman Missal © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.
- For hymns: Calamus Licence number: 0212

*along with any other copyright information.*

(END)

## ORDER OF SERVICE FOR A WEDDING WITHOUT MASS

Entry of the Bride:

*(Whatever music you choose e.g. Richard Wagner: Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin)*

All stand

Hymn:

*Print out the words for the first hymn here.*

Priest: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

The priest says a few words of welcome  
and then says the opening prayer or 'Collect'.

All: **Amen.**

All sit

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First reading

*(Scriptural quotation: e.g. 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13)*

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm

The response repeated between each verse is:  
(e.g.) **The Lord fills the earth with his love**

*(or if you choose to have a hymn instead, print it in full, titled 'Hymn' instead of 'Responsorial Psalm')*

*If there is a second reading, lay it out like the first, with the same ending; this is the word of the Lord &c*

All stand to greet the gospel:

All: **Alleluia, alleluia! God is love; let us love one another as God has loved us. Alleluia!**

The Gospel  
*(Scripture reference goes here)*

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Priest: A reading from the holy Gospel according to (Matthew, or whoever)

All: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

At the end of the Gospel:

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Please sit for the homily

### **THE RITE OF MARRIAGE**

The priest first questions the couple regarding their proper intentions, and they declare before all that they are freely and willingly marrying each other.

They then exchange their vows, for which all please stand.

Finally, the priest says

Priest: What God joins together, let no one put asunder!

Let us bless the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Bride and groom each exchange rings with a prayer, ending

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

All: **Amen.**

The Prayers  
all remain standing

After each prayer: ...let us pray to the Lord.

All: **Lord we ask you, hear our prayer.**

At the end of the prayers, the intercession of the Mother of God is sought:

**Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

After another prayer, we say together the Our Father:

**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.**

The newly-weds kneel, and the priest pronounces the Nuptial Blessing over them. Everyone else remains standing.

Priest: ...through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

The priest then gives the final blessing.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Priest: (Three prayers)

All: **Amen.** (after each)

Priest: May almighty God bless all of you who are gathered here: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

# THE SIGNING OF THE CIVIL REGISTER

all sit

Music: (or Hymn set out in full)

e.g. Air from Suite no. 3 in G, by Johann Sebastian Bach

As the newly-weds emerge from signing the register, please stand.

Music:

*e.g. Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream by Felix Mendelssohn*

*N.b.: You must add on this copyright information at the end:*

- Excerpts from the English translation of the Rite of Marriage © 2013, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved.
- Excerpts from the English translation and chants of The Roman Missal © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.
- For hymns: Calamus Licence number: 0212

*along with any other copyright information.*

(END)

# ORDER OF SERVICE FOR A WEDDING WITH NUPTIAL MASS

Entry of the Bride:

*(Whatever music you choose e.g. Richard Wagner: Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin)*

All stand

Hymn:

*Print out the words of the first hymn here.*

Priest: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

The priest says a few words of welcome.

We say or sing together the Gloria:

**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.**

The priest then says the opening prayer or 'Collect'.

All: **Amen.**

All sit

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First reading

*(Scriptural quotation: e.g. 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13)*

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

### Responsorial Psalm

The response repeated between each verse is:  
(e.g.) **The Lord fills the earth with his love**

*(or if you choose to have a hymn instead, print it in full, titled 'Hymn' instead of 'Responsorial Psalm')*

*If there is a second reading, lay it out like the first, with the same ending; The word of the Lord &c*

All stand to greet the gospel:

All: **Alleluia, alleluia! God is love; let us love one another as God has loved us. Alleluia!**

### The Gospel

*(Scripture reference goes here)*

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Priest: A reading from the holy Gospel according to (Matthew, or whoever)

All: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

At the end of the Gospel:

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Please sit for the homily

### THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

The priest first questions the couple regarding their proper intentions, and they declare

before all that they are freely and willingly marrying each other.

They then exchange their vows, for which all please stand.

Finally, the priest says

Priest: What God joins together, let no one put asunder!  
Let us bless the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Bride and groom each exchange rings with a prayer, ending  
In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

The Prayers  
all remain standing

After each prayer: ...let us pray to the Lord.

All: **Lord we ask you, hear our prayer.**

At the end of the prayers, the intercession of the Mother of God is sought:  
**Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

The priest concludes this section with a prayer.

## **THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

The bride and groom bring up the bread and wine for the Mass.  
All remain seated.

Hymn: (or music)

The priest will address everyone, and everyone stands:

Priest: Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the almighty Father.

All: **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of**

**his name, for our good and for the good of all his holy Church.**

The priest says the Prayer over the Gifts.

Priest: ...through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: The Lord be with you

All: **And with your spirit.**

Priest: Lift up your hearts

All: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All: **It is right and just.**

The priest reads the Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer. At the end, all say or sing:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of hosts! Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

All kneel for the Eucharistic Prayer

Acclamation after the consecration:

Priest: The mystery of faith.

All: **Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.**

Priest: ...for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

All stand.

All then pray the Lord's Prayer:

**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.**

The newly-weds kneel, and the priest pronounces the Nuptial Blessing over them. Everyone else remains standing.

Priest: ...through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Other prayers follow.

Priest: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Priest: Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may then greet their neighbours.

**Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.**

All kneel

Priest: Behold the Lamb of God; behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb.

All: **Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

Those who are not Catholics, and those who are not regular at the sacraments, are very welcome to approach at Communion time to receive a blessing. The custom is to cross the arms over the chest.

The priest then gives the prayer after Communion. All stand.

Priest: ...through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

The priest then gives the final blessing.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Priest: (Three prayers)

All: **Amen.** (after each)

Priest: May almighty God bless all of you who are gathered here: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: Go forth, the Mass is ended.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

**THE SIGNING OF THE CIVIL REGISTER**

all sit

Music: (or Hymn set out in full)

e.g. Air from Suite no. 3 in G, by Johann Sebastian Bach

Music:

*e.g. Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream by Felix Mendelssohn*

*N.b.: You must add on this copyright information at the end:*

- Excerpts from the English translation of the Rite of Marriage © 1969, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved.
- Excerpts from the English translation and chants of The Roman Missal © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.
- For hymns: Calamus Licence number: 0212

*along with any other copyright information.*

(END)

# CHOOSING THE READINGS

## FOR YOUR WEDDING.

**T**HE Church encourages you to make your own choice of reading for the wedding service. Please note, though, that only scripture is to be read during the Liturgy of the Word. You can, however, have any reading from the Bible that you wish, though it would be a good idea to consult the priest first if you want to move outside the following readings, which are recommended by the Church to you, some being more suitable than others.

### **PRACTICAL ADVICE ON MAKING THE CHOICE.**

**F**irstly, choose the Gospel from the list below, or from the four Gospels in the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). The Gospel is the keynote of the readings, and thus it is a good idea to choose this first. The priest or deacon who does your wedding will always read this, so don't ask somebody else.

Second, choose another reading, either from the New Testament (but not a Gospel) or the Old Testament. If you wish, you can have both a reading from the Old and a reading from the New, but we would not advise this if you are going to have a lot of non-religious guests at the wedding, who might find it a bit heavy.

### **CHOOSING READERS**

**W**hen choosing readers, it is a good idea to choose them on the basis of how well they can read in public, rather than choosing someone simply because you want to give them something to do. So, people used to public speaking, like teachers or lawyers, or business people used to giving presentations are often a good idea.

You will need a reader for the first reading, who can read the psalm too, unless this is replaced with a hymn. Alternatively, you could have a different reader for the psalm.

## STAGE 1

CHOOSE ONE OF THE GOSPEL READINGS:

*The Gospels recall the words of Jesus Christ who will be present with you at your wedding and who will stay with you in the years ahead. The Gospel reading is the most important of the readings. At your wedding ceremony it will be read by the priest or deacon.*

### GOSPEL 1

*Jesus' sermon on the mount is the heart of his teaching. His words on gentleness and mercy remind us of two essential qualities in his own life and in every successful marriage.*

Matthew 5:1-12

SEEING the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them: 'How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage. Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied. Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God. Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God. Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

### GOSPEL 2

*Jesus' words remind every married couple that they are the "light of the world". Married love is one of the main ways in which God shows his love to the world.*

Matthew 5:13-16

JESUS said to his disciples: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. 'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub: they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

### GOSPEL 3

*Jesus explains how his words are the best foundation for a lasting and successful marriage.*

Matthew 7.21.24-29

JESUS said to his disciples: 'It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord'', who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven.'

‘Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against the house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fail it had!’ Jesus had now finished what he wanted to say, and his teaching made a deep impression on the people because he taught them with authority, and not like their own scribes.

#### **GOSPEL 4**

*Jesus recalls God’s original intention in marriage: that two people become one and so can never be divided.*

Matthew 19:3-6

**S**OME Pharisees approached Jesus, and to test him they said, ‘Is it against the Law for a man to divorce his wife on any pretext whatever?’ He answered, ‘Have you not read that the creator from the beginning made them male and female and that he said: This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body? They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.’

#### **GOSPEL 5**

*Jesus gives us the central commandments of his life and teaching—they are the commandments of love.*

Matthew 22:35-40

**A**LAWYER, to disconcert Jesus, put a question, ‘Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?’ Jesus said, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.’

#### **GOSPEL 6**

Mark 10:6-9

**J**ESUS said, ‘From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.’

#### **GOSPEL 7**

*Jesus’ first miracle in St John’s Gospel was at the wedding feast in Cana. As at Cana, he is present in every marriage to help the bride and groom to find true happiness.*

John 2:1-11

**T**HERE was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine

provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' Jesus said, 'Woman why turn to me? My hour has not come yet.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water,' and they filled them to the brim. 'Draw some out now,' he told them, and take it to the steward.' They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from only the servants who had drawn the water knew - the steward called the bridegroom and said, 'People generally serve the best wine first, and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink, but you have kept the best wine till now. This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him.

### **GOSPEL 8**

*Jesus, in this and the following two readings, speaks to his followers on the night before his own greatest act of love when he laid down his life for his friends. In this extract he invites us to remain in his love so that we can love others.*

John 15:9-12

**J**ESUS said to his disciples: As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete. This is my commandment: love one another, as I loved you.

### **GOSPEL 9**

*Jesus invites us to love one another as he has loved us - even to the laying down of our lives.*

John 15:12-16

**J**ESUS said to his disciples: This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants any more, because a servant does not know his master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name.

### **GOSPEL 10**

John 17:20-26

**J**ESUS raised his eyes to heaven and said: Holy Father, I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me. May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the

world will realise that it was you who sent me and that I have loved them as much as you loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Father, Righteous One, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them.’

## STAGE 2

CHOOSE ONE READING FROM EITHER THE OLD TESTAMENT OR ONE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS.

*You may, if you prefer, choose two readings—one from each section. Here again, you have a wide choice. Among the most popular Old Testament readings are the first and second in the list from the Book of Genesis. These recall how marriage was part of God’s plan from the moment of creation. Jesus took up the words in his teaching on marriage: “God created man in the image of himself, male and female he created them.. This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.”*

### OLD TESTAMENT READING 1

A reading from the book of Genesis

1:26-28,31

**G**OD said, ‘Let us make man in our own image. in the likeness of our selves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.’ God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.” God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good.

The word of the Lord.

### OLD TESTAMENT READING 2

A reading from the book of Genesis

2:18-24

**T**HE Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate.” So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him. So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed: “This at last is bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh! This is to be called woman, for this was taken

from man.” This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.

The word of the Lord.

### OLD TESTAMENT READING 3

A reading from the book of Genesis

24:48-51.58-67

**A**BRAHAM’S servant said to Laban, “I bless the Lord, God of my master Abraham, who had so graciously led me to choose the daughter of my master’s brother for his son. Now tell me whether you are prepared to show kindness and goodness to my master; if not, say so, and I shall know what to do.” Laban and Bethuel replied, “This is from the Lord; it is not in our power to say yes or no to you. Rebekah is there before you. Take her and go; and let her become the wife of your master’s son, as the Lord has decreed.” They called Rebekah and asked her, “Do you want to leave with this man?” “I do,” she replied. Accordingly they let their sister Rebekah go, with her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men. They blessed Rebekah in these words: “Sister of ours, increase to thousands and tens of thousands! May your descendants gain possession of the gates of their enemies!” Rebekah and her servants stood up, mounted the camels, and followed the man. The servant took Rebekah and departed. Isaac, who lived in the Negeb, had meanwhile come into the wilderness of the well of Lahai Roi. Now Isaac went walking in the fields as evening fell, and looking up saw camels approaching. And Rebekah looked up and saw Isaac. She jumped down from her camel, and asked the servant, “Who is that man walking through the fields to meet us?” The servant replied, “That is my master”; then she took her veil and hid her face. The servant told Isaac the whole story, and Isaac led Rebekah into his tent and made her his wife; and he loved her. And so Isaac was consoled for the loss of his mother.

The word of the Lord.

### OLD TESTAMENT READING 4

A reading from the book of Tobit

7:6-14

**R**AGUEL kissed Tobias and wept. Then finding words, he said, “Blessings on you, child! You are the son of a noble father. How sad it is that someone so virtuous and full of good deeds should have gone blind!” He fell on the neck of his kinsman Tobias and wept. And his wife Edna wept for him, and so did his daughter Sarah. Raguel killed a sheep from the flock, and they gave Tobias and Raphael a warm-hearted welcome. They washed and bathed and sat down to table. Then Tobias said to Raphael, “Brother Azarias, will you ask Raguel to give me my sister Sarah?” Raguel overheard the words, and said to the young man, “Eat and drink, and make the most of your evening; no one else has the right to take my daughter Sarah no one but you, my brother. In any case I, for my own part, am not at liberty to give her to anyone else, since you are her next of kin. However, my boy, I must be frank with you: I have tried to find a husband for her seven times among our kinsmen, and all of them have died the first evening, on going to her room. But for the present, my boy, eat and drink; the Lord will grant you his grace

and peace.” Tobias spoke out, “I will not hear of eating and drinking till you have come to a decision about me”. Raguel answered, “Very well. Since, as prescribed by the Book of Moses, she is given to you, heaven itself decrees she shall be yours. I shall therefore entrust your sister to you. From now you are her brother and she is your sister. She is given to you from today for ever. The Lord of heaven favour you tonight, my child, and grant you his grace and peace.” Raguel called for his daughter Sarah, took her by the hand and gave her to Tobias with these words, “I entrust her to you; the law and the ruling recorded in the Book of Moses assign her to you as your wife. Take her; take her home to your father’s house with a good conscience. The God of heaven grant you a good journey in peace.” Then he turned to her mother and asked her to fetch him writing paper. He drew up the marriage contract, how he gave his daughter as bride to Tobias according to the ordinance in the Law of Moses. After this they began to eat and drink.  
The word of the Lord.

### OLD TESTAMENT READING 5

A reading from the book of Tobit

8:4-8

**O**N the evening of their marriage, Tobias said to Sarah, “You and I must pray and petition our Lord to win his grace and protection.” They began praying for protection, and this was how he began: “You are blessed, O God of our fathers; blessed, too, is your name for ever and ever. Let the heavens bless you and all things you have made for evermore. It was you who created Adam, you who created Eve his wife to be his help and support; and from these two the human race was born. It was you who said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make him a helpmate like himself.’ And so I do not take my sister for any lustful motive; I do it in singleness of heart. Be kind enough to have pity on her and on me and bring us to old age together.” And together they said, “Amen, Amen.”

The word of the Lord.

### OLD TESTAMENT READING 6

A reading from the Song of Songs

2:8-10.14.16; 8:6-7

**I**HEAR my Beloved. See how he comes leaping on the mountains, bounding over the hills. My Beloved is like a gazelle, like a young stag. See where he stands behind our wall. He looks in at the window, he peers through the lattice. My Beloved lifts up his voice, he says to me, “Come then, my love, my lovely one, come. My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock. In the coverts of the cliff, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet and your face is beautiful.” My beloved is mine and I am his. Set me like a seal on your heart, like a seal on your arm. For love is strong as Death, jealousy relentless as Sheol. The flash of it is a flash of fire, a flame of the Lord himself. Love no flood can quench, no torrents drown.

The word of the Lord.

## OLD TESTAMENT READING 7

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus

26:1-4.13-16

**H**APPY the husband of a really good wife; the number of his days will be doubled. A perfect wife is the joy of her husband, he will live out the years of his life in peace. A good wife is the best of portions, reserved for those who fear the Lord; rich or poor, they will be glad of heart; cheerful of face, whatever the season. The grace of a wife will charm her husband, her accomplishments will make him stronger. A silent wife is a gift from the Lord, no price can be put on a well-trained character. A modest wife is a boon twice over, a chaste character cannot be weighed on scales. Like the sun rising over the mountains of the Lord is the beauty of a good wife in a well-kept house.

The word of the Lord.

## OLD TESTAMENT READING 8

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah

31:31-34

**S**EE, the days are coming—it is the Lord who speaks—when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive - it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, “Learn to know the Lord!” No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest it is the Lord who speaks.

The word of the Lord.

## OLD TESTAMENT READING 9 (in Eastertime only)

*This book is actually from the New Testament, but at Easter it may be substituted for the Old Testament.*

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse

19:1.5-9

**I**, JOHN, seemed to hear the great sound of a huge crowd in heaven, singing, “Alleluia! Victory and glory and power to our God!” Then a voice came from the throne; it said, “Praise our God, you servants of his and all who, great or small, revere him”. And I seemed to hear the voices of a huge crowd, like the sound of the ocean or the great roar of thunder, answering, “Alleluia! The reign of the Lord our God Almighty has begun; let us be glad and joyful and give praise to God, because this is the time for the marriage of the Lamb. His bride is ready, and she has been able to dress herself in dazzling white linen, because her linen is made of the good deeds of the saints.” The angel said, “Write this: happy are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.”

The word of the Lord.

## NEW TESTAMENT READING 1

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

8:31-35.37-39

**W**ITH God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us. Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us. For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING 2**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

12:1-2. 9-18

**T**HINK of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do. Do not let your love be a pretence, but sincerely prefer good to evil. Love each other as much as brothers should, and have a profound respect for each other. Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with great earnestness of spirit. If you have hope, this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying. If any of the saints are in need you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care. Bless those who persecute you: never curse them, bless them. Rejoice with those who rejoice and be sad with those in sorrow. Treat everyone with equal kindness; never be condescending but make real friends with the poor. Do not allow yourself to become self-satisfied. Never repay evil with evil but let everyone see that you are interested only in the highest ideals. Do all you can to live at peace with everyone.

The word of the Lord.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING 3**

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 6:13-15.17-20

**T**HE body is not meant for fornication; it is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. God, who raised the Lord from the dead, will by his power raise us up too. You know, surely, that your bodies are members making up the body of Christ. But anyone who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him. Keep away from fornication. All the other sins are committed outside the body; but to fornicate is to sin against your own body. Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God.

The word of the Lord.

#### NEW TESTAMENT READING 4

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 12:31 - 13:8

**B**E ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them. If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing every thing, and if I have faith in all its fullness, to move mountains, but without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever. Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes. Love does not come to an end. The word of the Lord.

#### NEW TESTAMENT READING 5

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians 5:2.21-33

**F**OLLOW Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up in your place. Give away to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in every thing. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrifice himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body - and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church. To sum up; you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband.

The word of the Lord.

#### NEW TESTAMENT READING 6

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians 3:12-17

**Y**OU are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful. Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home in you. Teach each other, and advise each other,

in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING 7**

A reading from the letter of St Peter

3:1-9

**W**IVES should be obedient to their husbands. Then, if there are some husbands who have not yet obeyed the word, they may find themselves won over, without a word spoken, by the way their wives behave, when they see how faithful and conscientious they are. Do not dress up for show: doing up your hair, wearing gold bracelets and fine clothes; all this should be inside, in a person's heart, imperishable: the ornament of a sweet and gentle disposition - this is what is precious in the sight of God. That was how the holy women of the past dressed themselves attractively; they hoped in God and were tender and obedient to their husbands; like Sarah, who was obedient to Abraham, and called him her Lord. You are now her children, as long as you live good lives and do not give way to fear and worry. In the same way, husbands must always treat their wives with consideration in their life together, respecting a woman as one who, though she may be the weaker partner, is equally an heir to the life of grace. This will stop anything from coming in the way of your prayers. Finally: you should all agree among yourselves and be sympathetic, love the brothers, have compassion and be self-effacing. Never pay back one wrong with another one; instead pay back with a blessing. That is what you are called to do, so that you inherit a blessing yourself.

The word of the Lord.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING 8**

A reading from the first letter of St John

3:18-24

**M**Y children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, -because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything. My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING 9**

A reading from the first letter of St John

4:7-12

**M**Y dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away. My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another. No one has ever seen God; but as long as we love one another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us.

The word of the Lord.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*this one is normally used:*

R. The Lord fills the earth with his love.

**C. The Lord fills the earth with his love.**

R. They are happy, whose God is the Lord,  
the people he has chosen as his own.

The Lord looks on those who revere him,  
on those who hope in his love.

**C: The Lord fills the earth with his love,**

R. Our soul is waiting for the Lord.

The Lord is our help and our shield.

In him do our hearts find joy.

We trust in his holy name.

**C. The Lord fills the earth with his love.**

R. May your love be upon us, O Lord,  
as we place all our hope in you.

**C. The Lord fills the earth with his love.**

## ALLELUIA VERSE

**C: Alleluia, alleluia !**

**God is love; let us love one another  
as God has loved us. Alleluia!**

## BIDDING PRAYERS

*These are the suggested ones. I strongly recommend that you choose, say, four or five of them. It's best not to have the lot, though the last one should usually be the lead in to the Hail Mary. You are welcome to write your own reader's prayers if you prefer to, but leave the priest's prayers unaltered, please. Note that there are two sets of prayers here; there is no reason why you can't mix and match.*

### **These prayers may be used when both bride and groom are Christian**

**Priest:** Dear brothers and sisters, as we call to mind the special gift of grace and charity by which God has been pleased to crown and consecrate the love of our sister N. and our brother N., let us commend them to the Lord.

**Reader.** That these faithful Christians N. and N., newly joined in Holy Matrimony may always enjoy health and well-being, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader.** That he will bless their covenant as he chose to sanctify marriage at Cana in Galilee, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader.** That they be granted perfect and fruitful love, peace and strength, and that they bear faithful witness to the name of Christian, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That the Christian people may grow in virtue day by day and that all who are burdened by any need may receive the help of grace from above, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader.** That the grace of the Sacrament will be renewed by the Holy Spirit in all married persons here present, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** Let us commend ourselves and all God's people living and dead to Mary, Mother of God and wife of Joseph the carpenter.

People: **Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

**Reader:** Let us now pray for a while in silence.

**Priest:** Graciously pour out upon this husband and wife, O Lord, the Spirit of your love, to make them one heart and one soul, so that nothing whatever may divide those you have joined, and no harm come to those you have filled with your blessing. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**,These prayers may be used when either bride or groom is not Christian  
They can also be used for the marriage of two Christians.**

**Priest:** Dear brothers and sisters, let us accompany this new family with our prayers, that the mutual love of this couple may grow daily and that God in his kindness will sustain all families throughout the world.

**Reader:** For this bride and groom, and for their well-being as a family, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** For their relatives and friends, and for all who have assisted this couple, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** For young people preparing to enter Marriage, and for all whom the lord is calling to another state in life, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** For all families throughout the world and for lasting peace among all people, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** For all members of our families who have passed from this world, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** For the Church, the holy People of God, and for unity among all Christians, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** Let us commend ourselves and all God's people living and dead to Mary, Mother of God and wife of Joseph the carpenter.

People: **Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

**Priest:** Lord Jesus, who are present in our midst, as N. and N. seal their union, accept our prayer and fill us with your Spirit. Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**