



Dear Engaged Couple:

We are delighted that the two of you are getting married and plan to continue your Christian journey with us as a married couple.

As an assembly of believers, we focus our lives on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By seeking the Sacrament of Marriage, you indicate that you intend Jesus' message to be the guiding factor of your life together.

The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage, which is rooted in the Sunday assembly, is not a private family function, nor is it merely a social affair or a personal expression of your love for one another. Rather, it is an action of the entire church in whose presence you commit yourselves to one another. Because the Sacrament of Marriage is worship, it is principally congregational. And because it is congregational, every effort is made to enable the assembly to participate in a full and active manner. The liturgy is neither a show nor a performance and it is not enhanced by the presence of passive observers. Everyone present should be able to hear, see, speak, sing, and pray.

The staff at St. Mary's Cathedral is happy to help you with the preparation of your wedding liturgy. Together, we have many years of collective experience. Also, please remember that in addition to weddings, St. Mary's Cathedral hosts many other liturgical functions every day of the year.

In light of this, we have developed a set of principles, policies, and procedures for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage at St. Mary's Cathedral. Our main reason is to ensure that the Sacrament of Marriage which you ask to celebrate with us be of the best theological, liturgical, and artistic quality, and be an unforgettable moment in your life.

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General Policies and Procedures

1. St. Mary's Cathedral is available for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage on Friday afternoons (time is generally flexible) and on Saturdays at 2:00 pm. Most weddings are celebrated in the main upper church; however, for smaller weddings (up to 100 guests), the lower church is available.
2. Guest priests or deacons are welcome to preside. They, too, must abide by the principles, policies, and procedures for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage at St. Mary's Cathedral. They will be expected to follow all liturgical rubrics as indicated in the official rite of the church and the liturgical norms of the Cathedral. Guest presiders are strongly encouraged to attend the wedding rehearsal, which will be conducted by the Cathedral's wedding host. Although they undoubtedly have presided at many weddings, St. Mary's Cathedral has its own specific needs, and every presider brings his own style and presence to the liturgy. To ensure that your ceremony goes smoothly, your guest priest/deacon should be at the rehearsal.
3. The wedding party, florist, photographer, and videographer are to abide by the principles, policies, and procedures for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage at St. Mary's Cathedral. It is extremely important that everyone follow the timetable strictly, so there is a smooth flow, both for your wedding and for any functions which may follow your wedding.
4. St. Mary's Cathedral has its own well-trained and experienced wedding and liturgy staff. They will assist you in your preparations, conduct your wedding rehearsal, and be present for the liturgy. If you have contracted someone else to help with your wedding, please understand that this person's responsibilities do NOT pertain to the liturgy and that they are NOT to interfere in any way with the responsibilities of the Cathedral wedding staff which include the preparation, the rehearsal, and the celebration of the liturgy.
5. Due to time constraints, we do not allow guest book signing in St. Mary's Cathedral or anywhere else on the campus. You may want to advise your guests of this beforehand.
6. Since the bride and groom are both in the opening procession, they are encouraged to welcome their guests as they arrive. And due to limited time for pictures after the liturgy, the "first look" (if you are having one) is to take place before the liturgy. Most couples arrange this with their photographer prior to arriving at the Cathedral or at the start of picture time before the liturgy begins.

7. Rice, bird seed, bubbles, confetti, flower petals, and balloons are not allowed in the Cathedral or on the Cathedral campus. Flower girls are welcome to carry flowers, but not to throw them about. Always remember that there is a liturgical function scheduled after your wedding. Aisle runners are not permitted in the Cathedral. Unity candles or other symbols are not permitted as they are not part of the official marriage rite.

If all of this seems overwhelming, it may be helpful to remember that these guidelines are the result of direct experience celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage numerous times each year at the Cathedral. In return, we have a collective wedding experience which is quite exceptional. In addition, as the Cathedral Church for the entire Diocese of St. Cloud, is held by high standards and is expected to celebrate liturgies in their fullness and of the highest quality. So, although the guidelines may seem endless and restricting, in the long run, they assure a wedding liturgy which will be breathtaking and unforgettable.

Liturgical Environment

Liturgical furnishings are sacred; they are not liturgical props and are not to be moved, removed, or replaced. Depending on the liturgical season, St. Mary's Cathedral will show a different liturgical environment. This seasonal environment is intended for all liturgical celebrations during that particular time of the year, including your wedding. The existing environment will not be changed or removed for your wedding. You may consult staff for details.

You may request votive candelabras in the sanctuary at an additional fee. Please discuss this with the liturgy staff one month prior to your wedding date. Bows, ribbons, and foliage are not to be taped, glued, or nailed to the pews. They may be fastened with ribbon, rubber bands, or felt-covered florist wire. It is the responsibility of the ushers or another attendant to remove bows, ribbons, and foliage as soon as the guests have departed.

Worship Aid

The staff will prepare a customized worship aid for your wedding. The same standards that hold for the liturgy also hold for the worship aid. It is neither a biographical scrapbook nor a compilation of favorite poems. It simply details the liturgy so the assembly may participate fully in the celebration of your wedding.

You may wish to create an insert with the names of your wedding party, reception information, etc.

We have developed the following process:

1. The couple provides all necessary information on the information form a minimum of four weeks prior to the wedding date.
2. You will receive a proof of the worship aid by email.
3. You will return the corrected copy to the Cathedral and corrections will be made in a timely manner. Typographical errors found after approval of proof are not the responsibility of St. Mary's Cathedral.
4. Your wedding fee includes the printing of 150 worship aids on white paper. For quantities over 150, a charge of \$25.00 per 50 worship aids will be added. This fee is to be paid no later than the night of your wedding rehearsal.
5. The worship aids will be available at the wedding rehearsal. If you created an insert, it is your responsibility to stuff the insert into the worship aid. You may make arrangements to pick up the worship aids a couple days prior to the wedding rehearsal if needed.
6. We encourage you to take the remaining worship aids after your wedding to your reception or mail some to relatives who are not able to attend.

Use of The Cathedral's Lower Church

The wedding party is welcome to arrive at the lower church, by entering through the southside ground-level entrances off 1st Street 2 ½ hours before the wedding starts. Because we have a tight wedding schedule, we cannot make any exceptions to this rule. We do not have a bridal suite; our choir rehearsal room may serve as a simple bridal dressing room. The choir rehearsal room is neither equipped for nor meant to be a beauty parlor. Please take care of make-up and hair styling before arriving. Everyone else should dress before coming to the Cathedral.

If you think it necessary to have refreshments available for the wedding party prior to the wedding, please keep them to a minimum (simple snacks and beverages). Beverages and food are allowed only in the gathering area, located in the lower church. Food service must be completed one hour prior to the wedding. No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are permitted on the campus of St. Mary's Cathedral. (This includes the streets around the Cathedral.) You are responsible for cleanup. A special attendant should be appointed whose responsibility it is to remove any remaining food and trash so that the space is left clean for the next event. All Cathedral buildings are smoke free.

All articles must be removed from the lower church, including the choir rehearsal room prior to the beginning of the wedding liturgy. Please communicate this to your bridal party and family. In case of damage or extra clean-up, an additional fee may be assessed. Be careful not to leave any of your belongings unattended. St. Mary's Cathedral is not responsible for loss or theft.

Timetable for a Saturday Wedding

11:00 am	Access to upper church by florist, photographer, etc.
11:30 am	Arrival of bridal party to lower church
12:00 pm	Access to upper church
1:30 pm	Pictures end
1:45 pm	Line up
2:00 pm	Liturgy begins
3:00 pm	Liturgy ends
3:30 pm	Pictures end
3:45 pm	Departure

Wedding Rehearsal

The wedding coordinator will conduct your wedding rehearsal, which is scheduled to last a maximum of 75 minutes. Please advise your wedding party that the rehearsal is to begin on time. Please encourage all your attendants, ushers, parents, cross bearer/altar server, readers, and personal attendant to attend the wedding rehearsal. Having everyone present at the rehearsal ensures a smooth flow of events on the day of your wedding and helps prevent any undue stress. The primary purpose of the rehearsal is to walk through all aspects of the wedding liturgy.

The Wedding Liturgy

Introduction

The wedding liturgy is first and foremost the public worship of God. In other words, even though it focuses on the bride and groom, the wedding liturgy is the total community's act of worship within which the bride and groom's exchange of vows takes place. It is an opportunity for all guests to join the bride and groom in praising God for the gift of love. What happens at Sunday Mass is really the model and guide to be used in planning your wedding. Therefore, the easiest way for a couple to plan and prepare this liturgy is to think about what happens at Sunday Mass.

Choice of Liturgical Ministers

Just as there are several people involved at Sunday Mass, so too, with your wedding liturgy. Rather than honoring friends and relatives by asking them to be part of the wedding party, the bride and groom should consider honoring them by asking them to minister at the wedding liturgy. Those who minister should be active in the practice of the faith.

The liturgical ministries are:

- A. Assembly:** participates in song, prayer, and gesture.
- B. Presider (Priest or Deacon):** calls the community to prayer and leads the worship.
- C. Ushers/Greeters (Ministers of Hospitality):** welcome the people, help them to find a place, and distribute the worship aid (program). Because Ministers of

Hospitality have duties during the opening procession and the Wedding itself, no other ministers (including bridesmaids and groomsmen) may serve in this role.

A minimum of two people are needed to serve as greeters to distribute worship aids. You should have one usher for every 50 people. It is highly recommended to have a minimum of four ushers, regardless of the number of guests. They should attend the wedding rehearsal to familiarize themselves with the space. Weddings are to begin on time. This can only happen if the ushers take their ministry seriously and seat people as they enter. Ushers are encouraged to have the wedding guests seated ten minutes prior to the start of the wedding. Late arrivals may be seated once the procession has reached the Sanctuary. Ushers should remain alert throughout the entire liturgy and be ready to assist when needed. Also, they are to assist the guests as they leave the church. It is the responsibility of the Ushers to remove pew bows and ribbons as well as any programs and any other articles.

- D. **Cross Bearer:** carries the cross in the opening procession. The procession that begins each worship service is intended to focus the attention of the community on the Lord and the fact that we have gathered to worship. The processional cross is that focal point. You might choose a family member or friend to carry the processional cross. This person should be present at the rehearsal. The processional cross weighs approximately 3-4 lbs. Anyone may serve as a cross bearer/acolyte, although a Catholic is preferred.
- E. **Lectors (readers):** proclaim the Word of God from the Sacred Scriptures and the Universal Prayer (prayers of petitions). You may choose to have one lector read all three or you may divide the responsibility among two or even three lectors. Ideally, the lector would be someone who reads in his or her church. However, anyone who reads well may proclaim the Scriptures. The lector also carries the Book of the Gospels in the procession. Please make sure that the lectors have their readings well in advance of the rehearsal so they can practice at home and encourage your lectors to attend the wedding rehearsal. Advise lectors that they are to speak slowly and to project clearly. They will be asked to rehearse at the microphone during the wedding rehearsal. The readings you select will be provided in a large size type at the rehearsal.
- F. **Gift Bearers:** present the bread and wine. If the wedding is celebrated within Mass, you will need two gift bearers to bring up the bread and wine. Anyone may serve as a gift bearer. The bride and groom may also present the gifts.

- G. Eucharistic Ministers:** assist in the distribution of Holy Communion. If the wedding is celebrated within the context of Mass, one minister is needed to distribute the Body of Christ along with the priest. Two additional ministers (optional) are needed for distributing the Precious Blood if you would like communion under both forms.

If you have friends or relatives who perform this service at their parish, you might ask them to distribute at your wedding. They should be present at the rehearsal. Eucharistic Ministers are required to be Catholic and have received all Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation).

- H. Music Ministers:** lead the assembly in song. Only Cathedral accompanists (pianist/organist) are allowed to play for liturgies at the Cathedral, including all weddings. This helps to avoid disappointment to the couple and their families, since it ensures a desirable continuity with the church's regular worship life. It protects the Cathedral's standards in terms of high-quality liturgy. And it helps guarantee that the service will go smoothly because presider, cantor, organist, and instrumentalists are accustomed to working with each other as well as with the specific demands of the space.

The cantor plays an important ministerial role in your wedding. He/she leads the hymns and the acclamations and sings the psalm. In many cases the cantor also functions as soloist. People who may be fine soloists are not necessarily trained as cantors. You will need a cantor for your wedding, preferably one from the Cathedral. If a family member or friend is going to serve as your cantor, he/she must be approved by the staff.

You will consult with our Director of Music to approve all music and liturgy plans. It is preferable that this meeting take place at least two months before the wedding. After that consultation, you may invite a soloist or instrumentalist(s) to join the organist and cantor. Do not make any arrangements before speaking with the Director of Music.

- I.** In addition, the Bride and Groom are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage, while the best man and maid of honor are the legal witnesses.

Other than the two legal witnesses (who must be 18 years of age or older), there is no function for other attendants at the wedding. Therefore, try to keep the number of attendants at a minimum. The use of small children under the age of 6 in the wedding party is inappropriate.

Outline of the Wedding Liturgy

Gathering of the Assembly

Your ushers/greeters should warmly greet the people as they arrive at the church. It would be particularly appropriate if you and your parents would also greet the people as they arrive. During this time of gathering before the procession, the prelude music is played.

Introductory Rites

Reception of the Couple

At the appointed time, the Celebrant goes with the servers (cross bearer) to the door of the church, receives the couple to be married, and greets them kindly, showing that the Church shares in their joy.

Procession

The wedding liturgy is a celebration of God's love manifest in two people. As such, the symbols used throughout the liturgy need to speak of the mutuality of marriage. The wedding procession is one such symbol: it is a liturgical procession signifying the gathering of God's people for worship. Both the bride and the groom will participate in the procession along with both of their parents. One instrumental piece is chosen to accompany the procession. Once all are in place the Entrance Hymn is sung by all. Alternately, instead of an instrumental procession, the Entrance Hymn may be sung during the procession. The assembly stands for the entire procession.

This is the form of procession acceptable at the Cathedral. The priest, lector(s) and other ministers gather with you, your parents, and the wedding party in the entry area of the church. Only one piece of music is used for the Entrance Procession. The congregation stands for the entire procession. The procession proceeds down the center aisle in the following order:

Entrance Procession

Cross Bearer
Servers (optional)
Lector (Book of Gospels) or Deacon (Book of Gospels)
Concelebrant (optional)
Celebrant
Groom & Parents
Attendants
Maid of Honor & Best Man
Flower Girl & Ring Bearer
Bride & Parents

Once in the Cathedral, the attendants are seated in the front row. As the primary ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage, the bride and groom assume a prominent place so that they are visible to all in the assembly.

Entrance Hymn: Following the procession, everyone joins in singing a hymn which helps to unify the assembly as well as focus on the act of worship which has begun. The hymn may be used as the processional music too (as at Sunday Mass). Possible hymns are listed in this document and may be heard on our website.

Greeting: The Sign of the Cross, greeting and introduction by the priest (or deacon) follows.

Gloria: The Gloria is sung at all wedding Masses.

Collect (Opening Prayer): The priest (or deacon) will conclude the Introductory Rites with the Collect or Opening Prayer.

Liturgy of the Word

One way of personalizing the wedding liturgy is choosing the Scriptures. There are three readings: one from the Old Testament, one from the New Testament and Gosepl. Read through and discuss the options with each other.

Please note: At least one reading that explicitly speaks of Marriage must always be chosen. These readings are designated by an asterisk. Additionally, if your wedding takes place during the Easter Season, the first reading is always taken from the Book of Revelation and no first reading is selected from the Old Testament.

First Reading (Old Testament): Options are found in this document.

Responsorial Psalm: The psalm is sung after the first reading. It is chanted by the cantor and includes an assembly refrain. Please choose your preferred text. The musical setting will be chosen by the Director of Music in conjunction with the musicians.

Second Reading (New Testament): Options are found in this document.

Gospel Acclamation: A sung acclamation always precedes the Gospel reading. This is usually a series of intoned "Alleluias" repeated by the assembly, coupled with a short psalm sentence, and followed by the same series of "Alleluias." The musical setting used is based on the liturgical season.

Gospel Reading: Chosen by the celebrant or homilist.

Homily: The priest (or deacon) will then preach a homily based upon the readings.

Celebration of Matrimony

Introduction: After the homily, the bridal party comes forward, then the priest (or deacon) gives a short instruction on marriage.

Questions before the Consent: The priest (or deacon) will ask you to publicly state your intentions concerning the freedom of your decision, the permanence of your commitment, and your commitment to family life.

Consent: Ideally, you would want to memorize the words for your vows and for the exchange of rings. However, you may repeat them after the priest (or deacon). The marriage vows are the essence of the sacrament. Therefore, you must choose one of the forms:

Form A: I, N., take you, N., to be my wife/husband. I promise to be faithful to you, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love you and to honor you all the days of my life.

Form B: I, N., take you, N., for my lawful wife/husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do us part.

Reception of the Consent: All will sing an acclamation.

Blessing and Giving of Rings: The wedding rings will then be blessed and exchanged.

Each of you will say the following, while placing the ring on your spouse's finger:

The following should be memorized: *N., receive this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

Hymn or Cantic of Praise: A short hymn or song is sung by the entire assembly as the wedding party returns to their place in the assembly.

Universal Prayer: The priest will then introduce the Universal Prayer. Options are found in this document.

If your celebration will not include the Eucharist (the Mass), skip over to the "Nuptial Blessing" and then to the "Concluding Rite".

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Altar: At this time your gift bearers will bring up the gifts of bread and wine, as at a Sunday Mass. This portion of the liturgy is short. Either an instrumental or short vocal piece is performed.

Eucharistic Prayer: The acclamations of this prayer (Sanctus, Mystery of Faith, and Amen) are sung. The priest will select the Eucharistic Prayer.

Lord's Prayer: The Lord's Prayer is prayed by all. The Lord's Prayer is always recited or chanted and never sung as a solo.

Nuptial Blessing: At the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer is the Nuptial Blessing.

Sign of Peace: At the Sign of Peace, the wedding couple will go together to share this greeting with their wedding party and parents then return to their place. Mass continues with the singing of the Lamb of God.

Communion: In order to celebrate this communal act, a song that includes the assembly is sung.

Concluding Rite

Solemn Blessing and Dismissal: There is a solemn blessing over the couple followed by the dismissal.

Introduction of the Couple: After the words of dismissal, the wedding couple will be formally presented.

Recessional: A festive instrumental is played as you and your wedding party exits the Cathedral. Options are included in the listing of Music and on our website.

Readings from the Old Testament

The First Reading is taken from the Old Testament. Please select 1 of the following 9 options:

- #1 **Genesis 1:26-28, 31a**
**Male and female he created them.*

- #2 **Genesis 2:18-24**
**The two of them become one body.*

- #3 **Genesis 24:48-51, 58-67**
**In his love for Rebekah, Isaac found solace after the death of his mother.*

- #4 **Tobit 7:6-14**
**May the Lord of heaven prosper you both. May he grant you mercy and peace.*

- #5 **Tobit 8:4b-8**
**Allow us to live together to a happy old age.*

- #6 **Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31**
**The woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.*

- #7 **Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a**
Stern as death is love.

- #8 **Sirach (Ecclesiasties) 26:1-4, 13-16**
**Like the sun rising in the Lord's heavens, the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home.*

- #9 **Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a**
I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

**reading references marriage*

A reading from the Book of Genesis

Then God said:

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

Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea,

the birds of the air, and the cattle,

and over all the wild animals

and all the creatures that crawl on the ground."

God created man in his image;

in the image of God he created him;

male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying:

"Be fertile and multiply;

fill the earth and subdue it.

Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air,

and all the living things that move on the earth."

God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

There are two accounts of the creation of the world and of humankind in Genesis. In this first account, the creation of man and woman represents the climax of creation; they are created in the image and likeness of God, man and woman together constituting this image and likeness of God. The wonderful dignity of man and woman is taught in this story as well as their complementarity, the essence of the gift of sexuality which God pronounced very good.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone.
I will make a suitable partner for him."
So the Lord God formed out of the ground
various wild animals and various birds of the air,
and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them;
whatever the man called each of them would be its name.
The man gave names to all the cattle,
all the birds of the air, and all wild animals;
but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man.
So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man,
and while he was asleep,
he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.
The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib
that he had taken from the man.
When he brought her to the man, the man said:
"This one, at last, is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
This one shall be called 'woman,'
for out of 'her man' this one has been taken."
That is why a man leaves his father and mother
and clings to his wife,
and the two of them become one body.

The Word of the Lord!

Commentary:

This is the second and, according to today's standards, less popular account of creation. In the past, this description of the creation of the first woman from the rib of man was sometimes used to point out the subordination of woman to man as his helpmate. But contemporary scholars point out that the Hebrew word for help does not indicate subordination. It is used, for example, of God as the helper of Israel. The version of the Bible which is used in Catholic liturgy translates helpmate properly as partner. This story might be used if the wedding homily were to teach of the sanctity of physical creation, including human sexuality. Man and woman in marriage are to be one flesh; so it has been ordained by God.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

The servant of Abraham said to Laban: "I bowed down in worship to the Lord, blessing the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to obtain the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. If, therefore, you have in mind to show true loyalty to my master, let me know; but if not, let me know that, too. I can then proceed accordingly."

Laban and his household said in reply: "This thing comes from the Lord; we can say nothing to you either for or against it. Here is Rebekah, ready for you; take her with you, that she may become the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has said."

So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Do you wish to go with this man?" She answered, "I do." At this they allowed their sister Rebekah and her nurse to take leave, along with Abraham's servant and his men. Invoking a blessing on Rebekah, they said: "Sister, may you grow into thousands of myriads; And may your descendants gain possession of the gates of their enemies!"

Then Rebekah and her maids started out; they mounted their camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and went on his way. Meanwhile Isaac had gone from Beer-lahai-roi and was living in the region of the Negeb.

One day toward evening he went out ... in the field, and as he looked around, he noticed that camels were approaching. Rebekah, too, was looking about, and when she saw him, she alighted from her camel and asked the servant, "Who is the man out there, walking through the fields toward us?" "That is my master," replied the servant.

Then she covered herself with her veil. The servant recounted to Isaac all the things he had done. Then Isaac took Rebekah into his tent; he married her, and thus she became his wife. In his love for her Isaac found solace after the death of his mother Sarah.

The Word of the Lord!

Commentary:

Many of the people at your wedding will not be familiar with this story. In order for the reading to make sense, the homilist will need to explain the verses in chapter 24 that precede it. If that is done, this reading will be revealed as a beautiful reading which emphasizes how Yahweh proved his fidelity by providing an appropriate wife for Abraham's son, Isaac. The first of the three nuptial blessings from the Rite of Marriage mentions the holy women whose praises were sung in the Scriptures. Rebekah was one of those holy women. This reading might be used to stress God's fidelity to you in marriage as well as the importance of the companionship and consolation husband and wife can offer each other in difficult times. So, it should be, as Rebekah consoled Isaac after the loss of his mother.

Option #4: Tobit 7:6-14

**May the Lord of heaven prosper you both.
May he grant you mercy and peace.*

A reading from the Book of Tobit

Raphael and Tobiah entered the house of Raguel and greeted him. Raguel sprang up and kissed Tobiah, shedding tears of joy. But when he heard that Tobit had lost his eyesight, he was grieved and wept aloud.

He said to Tobiah: "My child, God bless you! You are the son of a noble and good father. But what a terrible misfortune that such a righteous and charitable man should be afflicted with blindness!" He continued to weep in the arms of his kinsman Tobiah. His wife Edna also wept for Tobit; and even their daughter Sarah began to weep.

Afterward, Raguel slaughtered a ram from the flock and gave them a cordial reception. When they had bathed and reclined to eat, Tobiah said to Raphael, "Brother Azariah, ask Raguel to let me marry my kinswoman Sarah." Raguel overheard the words; so he said to the boy: "Eat and drink and be merry tonight, for no man is more entitled to marry my daughter Sarah than you, brother. Besides, not even I have the right to give her to anyone but you, because you are my closest relative. But I will explain the situation to you very frankly. I have given her in marriage to seven men, all of whom were kinsmen of ours, and all died on the very night they approached her. But now, son, eat and drink. I am sure the Lord will look after you both."

Tobiah answered, "I will eat or drink nothing until you set aside what belongs to me." Raguel said to him: "I will do it. She is yours according to the decree of the Book of Moses. Your marriage to her has been decided in heaven! Take your kinswoman from now on you are her love, and she is your beloved. She is yours today and ever after. And tonight, son, may the Lord of heaven prosper you both. May he grant you mercy and peace."

Then Raguel called his daughter Sarah, and she came to him. He took her by the hand and gave her to Tobiah with the words: "Take her according to the law. According to the decree written in the Book of Moses she is your wife. Take her and bring her back safely to your father. And may the God of heaven grant both of you peace and prosperity."

He then called her mother and told her to bring a scroll, so that he might draw up a marriage contract stating that he gave Sarah to Tobiah as his wife according to the decree of the Mosaic law. Her mother brought the scroll, and he drew up the contract, to which they affixed their seals. Afterward they began to eat and drink.

The Word of the Lord!

Commentary:

This and the following reading from Tobit are parts of the same story. But as in the previous reading from Genesis, one needs to know something of the story of the Book of Tobit to grasp the full significance of these selections from the account. Tobit, a devout and charitable man, lived in exile at Ninevah. His kinsman Raguel lived at Ecbatana. Each had a serious problem. Tobit was blind and Raguel's daughter Sarah had seven bridegrooms in succession killed on the wedding night by demon Asmodeus. God heard the prayer of Tobit and Sarah; he sent Tobit's son Tobiah to Raguel, married him to Sarah (and he was not killed on the wedding night) and gave him a cure for his father's blindness. The story has a certain human warmth and gentle humor. Tobit's talk of following the law of Moses refers to the patriarchal custom of keeping marriage within the clan. Making God and trust in God the foundation of your marriage is a formula for success.

A reading from the Book of Tobit

On their wedding night Tobiah arose from bed and said to his wife,
"Sister, get up. Let us pray and beg our Lord
to have mercy on us and to grant us deliverance."
Sarah got up, and they started to pray
and beg that deliverance might be theirs.
They began with these words:
"Blessed are you, O God of our fathers;
praised be your name forever and ever.
Let the heavens and all your creation
praise you forever.
You made Adam and you gave him his wife Eve
to be his help and support;
and from these two the human race descended.
You said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone;
let us make him a partner like himself.'
Now, Lord, you know that I take this wife of mine
not because of lust,
but for a noble purpose.
Call down your mercy on me and on her,
and allow us to live together to a happy old age."
They said together, "Amen, amen."

The Word of the Lord!

Commentary:

If one knows of Sarah's experience on her seven previous wedding nights, one can understand the urgency of both Sarah's and Tobiah's prayer. It is a lovely scene. Tobiah shows great respect for Sarah in his prayer. God created man and woman to be companions, partners. So he does not take her for any lustful motive, but in singleness of heart. To love each other with singleness of heart is a grace to be sought for in every marriage. And it is one God fully intends to grant, because fidelity and love in marriage are ordained to point to the faithful love of God for us. Marriage is to be a mystery pointing to the mysterious union of Christ with his Church.

A reading from the Book of Proverbs

When one finds a worthy wife,
her value is far beyond pearls.
Her husband, entrusting his heart to her,
has an unfailing prize.
She brings him good, and not evil,
all the days of her life.
She obtains wool and flax
and makes cloth with skillful hands.
She puts her hands to the distaff,
and her fingers ply the spindle.
She reaches out her hands to the poor,
and extends her arms to the needy.
Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;
the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Give her a reward of her labors,
and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The Word of the Lord!

Commentary:

Proverbs is an anthology of didactic poetry designed to inform and train the young about making good choices, and partly to provide advanced training in wisdom. This passage speaks of finding a “woman of worth,” extolling her value in practical, domestic terms. She is a priceless gift, not only to her husband, but to the needy to whom “she extends her arms.”

There is another feminine entity, Wisdom, which is extolled in the first nine chapters of the same Book of Proverbs. If you read the later passage through the lens of the earlier, the “woman of worth” is also the “woman of wisdom.” This, of course, in addition to enhancing her mystery and attractiveness, enhances many fold her value to her husband.

*“Happy the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding!
For her profit is better than profit in silver, And better than gold is her revenue;
She is more precious than corals, And none of your choice possessions can compare with her.”
(Proverbs 3:13-15)*

If husband and wife were alert not so much to the charm or beauty of the other but to the wisdom the other gained through the years, wouldn't their interest in one another keep advancing year after year?

A reading from the Song of Songs

Hark! my lover—here he comes
springing across the mountains,
leaping across the hills.
My lover is like a gazelle
or a young stag.
Here he stands behind our wall,
gazing through the windows,
peering through the lattices.
My lover speaks; he says to me,
“Arise, my beloved, my dove, my beautiful one, and come!
“O my dove in the clefts of the rock,
in the secret recesses of the cliff,
Let me see you,
let me hear your voice,
For your voice is sweet,
and you are lovely.”
My lover belongs to me and I to him.
He says to me:
“Set me as a seal on your heart,
as a seal on your arm;
For stern as death is love, –
relentless as the nether world is devotion;
its flames are a blazing fire.
Deep waters cannot quench love,
nor floods sweep it away.”

The Word of the Lord!

Commentary:

Some commentators, both Jewish and Christian, interpret the Song of Songs, which means ‘the greatest of all songs,’ allegorically. That is, they see the relationship of lover and beloved in the poems as pointing to various moments in the love relationship between God and Israel or between Christ and the Church. Other scholars see the book as a collection of hymns to true love sanctified by union. The inclusion of the Song of Songs in the canon of holy Scripture leads us to interpret the work as an analogy of the love of God for us; this interpretation also affirms the goodness and sanctity of sexual love. The passionate love of God for us is a mystery as is the passionate love of man and woman. It is as strong as death. The love of God for us in Christ conquered death forever and God’s Spirit of love given to us is the guarantee of our living and loving forever.

Option #8: Sirach (Ecclesiasties) 26:1-4, 13-16

**Like the sun rising in the Lord's heavens,
the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home.*

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiasties

Blessed the husband of a good wife,
twice-lengthened are his days;
A worthy wife brings joy to her husband,
peaceful and full is his life.
A good wife is a generous gift
bestowed upon him who fears the Lord;
Be he rich or poor, his heart is content,
and a smile is ever on his face.
A gracious wife delights her husband,
her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones;
A gift from the Lord is her governed speech,
and her firm virtue is of surpassing worth.
Choicest of blessings is a modest wife,
priceless her chaste soul.
A holy and decent woman adds grace upon grace;
indeed, no price is worthy of her temperate soul.
Like the sun rising in the Lord's heavens,
the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home.

The Word of the Lord!

Commentary:

Much of the Book of Sirach consists of advice from a father to his son and includes advice on sex and marriage. No doubt, many couples today will not choose this reading given the viewpoint taken in it. The selection is a description of a good wife from the husband's point of view which seems to place too great an emphasis on her function to provide him happiness. Roles and relationships change in society. But even in the second century before Christ, which is reflected in this reading, the centrality of one's marriage partner in one's life is clearly spelled out. There is a lesson here for us today when often two careers in one household, or the temptation to materialism which financial security and affluence brings, puts serious stresses on marriage relationships and tempts one to think that one's marriage partner is just one among many important things in one's life. That is not the message in Sirach.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah

The days are coming, says the Lord,
when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel
and the house of Judah.
It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers:
the day I took them by the hand
to lead them forth from the land of Egypt.
But this is the covenant which I will make
with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord.
I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts;
I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives
how to know the Lord.
All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord!

Commentary:

For the nomadic peoples of the desert, a covenant was a bond as strong as blood. The welfare of a covenant partner meant as much to you as your own welfare; whenever in need, what is mine is yours, what is yours is mine. The covenant in this reading from Jeremiah is that promised to Israel as the people of God and fulfilled, according to Christian faith, in Christ. If you choose this for the first reading and Ephesians for the second, you would highlight the relationship between God's covenant with his people and the marriage covenant. It is the faith of the Church that marriage is the privileged place where the covenant of God's love may be most effectively embodied among God's people. Marriage covenant love ought to be a pledge and an anticipation of the love shown in the kingdom of heaven. Marriage is, in a true sense, a herald announcing that kingdom.

Readings from the New Testament

The second reading is taken from the New Testament. Please select 1 of the following 12 options:

- #1 Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39
What will separate us from the love of Christ?
- #2 Romans 12:1-2, 9-13 (Short Form)
Romans 12:1-2, 9-18 (Long Form)
Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.
- #3 Romans 15:1b-3a, 5-7, 13
Welcome one another as Christ welcomed you.
- #4 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20
Your body is a temple of the Spirit.
- #5 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8a
**If I do not have love, I gain nothing.*
- #6 Ephesians 5:2a, 21-33 (Long Form)
Ephesians 5:2a, 21-33 (Short Form)
**This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church.*
- #7 Philippians 4:4-9
**The God of peace be with you.*
- #8 Colossians 3:12-17
And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.
- #9 Hebrews 13:1-4a, 5-6b
**Let marriage be held in honor by all.*
- #10 1 Peter 3:1-9
**Be of one mind, sympathetic, loving toward one another.*
- #11 1 John 3:18-24
Love in deed and in truth
- #12 1 John 4:7-12
God is love.
- #13 Revelation 19:1, 5-9a
Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast of the Lamb.
***This is the required First Reading during Eastertide.*

**reading references marriage*

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

If God is for us, who can be against us?

He did not spare his own Son

but handed him over for us all,

how will he not also give us everything else along with him?

Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones?

It is God who acquits us.

Who will condemn?

It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised,

who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

What will separate us from the love of Christ?

Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine,

or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly

through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life,

nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things,

nor powers, nor height, nor depth,

nor any other creature will be able to separate us

from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

For Saint Paul, the power of the love of God was demonstrated by the obedient death of Jesus on the cross. The death and resurrection of Jesus was the definitive victory over all of life's troubles, including death, so that nothing in the future can interfere with God's love for us; nothing can take us out of God's reach. God's powerful and unconditional love is the ideal of love married persons should strive for: first between themselves, then for all their brothers and sisters. While this reading fits well into any series of readings in the marriage Lectionary, it might be very fitting after the reading from the Song of Songs (OT-7). It is difficult for humans to imagine the depth and breadth of God's unconditional love for them; we are so conscious of our own limits, our pride and self-centeredness. But we must resist the temptation to model God's love on our own rather strive to model our love on God's, relying on the Spirit who is love to empower us.

Option 2A: Rom 12:1-2, 9-18 (Long Form)

Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God,
to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice,
holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship.

Do not conform yourselves to this age
but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,
that you may discern what is the will of God,
what is good and pleasing and perfect.

Let love be sincere;
hate what is evil,
hold on to what is good;
love one another with mutual affection;
anticipate one another in showing honor.

Do not grow slack in zeal,
be fervent in spirit,
serve the Lord.

Rejoice in hope,
endure in affliction,
persevere in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the holy ones,
exercise hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you,
bless and do not curse them.

Rejoice with those who rejoice,
weep with those who weep.

Have the same regard for one another;
do not be haughty but associate with the lowly;
do not be wise in your own estimation.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil;
be concerned for what is noble in the sight of all.

If possible, on your part, live at peace with all.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

The Commentary for this reading follows the Short Form of this reading on the next page

Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God,
to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice,
holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship.

Do not conform yourselves to this age
but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,
that you may discern what is the will of God,
what is good and pleasing and perfect.

Let love be sincere;
hate what is evil,
hold on to what is good;
love one another with mutual affection;
anticipate one another in showing honor.

Do not grow slack in zeal,
be fervent in spirit,
serve the Lord.

Rejoice in hope,
endure in affliction,
persevere in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the holy ones,
exercise hospitality.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

Paul urges the Christians at Rome to put their beliefs into practice so that their Christian behavior might become a sacrifice to God. He follows this with a warning not to model their lives on the behavior patterns of the world. Married couples would do well to frame this passage on Christian love and pray over it daily. Paul includes hospitality among the qualities Christians should manifest; this is a special virtue of married couples who should not be turned in on themselves, but make their home a place of welcome for others. In our society which encourages expectations of affluent living, our dreams of the future should encompass the welfare of all people, especially the poor, not just our own families.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

We ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves;
let each of us please our neighbor for the good,
for building up.

For Christ did not please himself.

May the God of endurance and encouragement
grant you to think in harmony with one another,
in keeping with Christ Jesus,
that with one accord you may with one voice
glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you,
for the glory of God.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

This passage offers some tough but vital advice to those entering marriage. Here's why: married people, over time, get to appreciate one another's strengths. Inevitably, however, they also discover one another's weaknesses with a clarity they did not have on the day of their wedding. When this happens in their relationship, when they are surprised, disappointed and, perhaps, worried, they should read and be strengthened by this passage from Saint Paul, starting with his prayer: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace..." Have hope, he says, that the Holy Spirit will empower you to love one another well. This means that, when necessary, you can "put up with the failings of the weak." The primary literal meaning of the Greek word translated here as "put up with" is actually much stronger. It means "support" or "carry." It seems that Paul is asking for more than toleration; rather, he is asking for serious, sustained assistance for the weak. And his next phrases show that he understands what that will sometimes ask for the partner: we ought "not to please ourselves; let each of us please our neighbor for the good, for building up." This can be a tall order. But, lucky for us, Christian marriage is not limited to reliance on one's own resources to make it successful. Christ, "who did not please himself," has won for us and shared with us the power of the Holy Spirit. Our God is a god "of endurance and encouragement" who shares those dispositions with us so that we may endure difficulties for the sake of one another and be able to encourage one another when one's weaknesses challenge one's hope. The meaning of God's gift to us in Jesus Christ is that if we die to ourselves out of love, we can discover a deeper, fuller life both here and hereafter. "Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God."

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord,
and the Lord is for the body;

God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

Whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

Avoid immorality.

Every other sin a person commits is outside the body,
but the immoral person sins against his own body.

Do you not know that your body

is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you,

whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

For you have been purchased at a price.

Therefore glorify God in your body.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

Do not be put off by Paul's chastening tone; the passage contains a very important Christian affirmation: the flesh and all material creation are holy and belong to the Lord. Paul uses two images to stress the sanctity of the human body: he reminds the Christians that their bodies are members of Christ's body and that they are temples of the Holy Spirit. We are not our own; we have been bought and paid for by the life and death of Jesus. There is evidence that this reading was already in use in some Christian marriage services in the sixth century.

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts.

But I shall show you a still more excellent way.

If I speak in human and angelic tongues

but do not have love,

I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.

And if I have the gift of prophecy

and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge;

if I have all faith so as to move mountains,

but do not have love, I am nothing.

If I give away everything I own,

and if I hand my body over so that I may boast

but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind.

It is not jealous, is not pompous,

it is not inflated, it is not rude,

it does not seek its own interests,

it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing

but rejoices with the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things,

hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

Paul teaches us that, while talent and knowledge are wonderful gifts, love is the one thing required of us in this life. But love is demanding; it encompasses patience, humility, selflessness, courtesy and respect. Love puts good interpretations on what others say and do; it does not resent others' success but rejoices in it and in the truth. Love is ready to forgive, to trust and to endure. Little more needs to be said about the heart of a marriage relationship. But the source of such a love, which is promised to every couple in the sacrament of marriage, can only be God.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters:

Live in love, as Christ loved us

and handed himself over for us.

Be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord.

For the husband is head of his wife

just as Christ is head of the Church,

he himself the savior of the body.

As the Church is subordinate to Christ,

so wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives,

even as Christ loved the Church

and handed himself over for her to sanctify her,

cleansing her by the bath of water with the word,

that he might present to himself the Church in splendor,

without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,

that she might be holy and without blemish.

So also husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.

He who loves his wife loves himself.

For no one hates his own flesh

but rather nourishes and cherishes it,

even as Christ does the Church,

because we are members of his Body.

For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother

and be joined to his wife,

and the two shall become one flesh.

This is a great mystery,

but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church.

In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself,

and the wife should respect her husband.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

The Commentary for this reading follows the Short Form of this reading on the next page.

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

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters:

Live in love, as Christ loved us
and handed himself over for us.

Husbands, love your wives,
even as Christ loved the Church
and handed himself over for her to sanctify her,
cleansing her by the bath of water with the word,
that he might present to himself the Church in splendor,
without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,
that she might be holy and without blemish.

So also husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.
He who loves his wife loves himself.

For no one hates his own flesh
but rather nourishes and cherishes it,
even as Christ does the Church,
because we are members of his Body.
*For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother
and be joined to his wife,
and the two shall become one flesh.*

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

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

This reading is part of what scholars call a household code. Taken by early Christianity from Hellenistic Judaism, these codes set forth the duties of husband, wives, parents, children, masters and slaves. In some cases the codes were borrowed almost without change, but his passage in Ephesians added a special elaboration on the meaning of marriage by comparing it to the relation between Christ and his Church. The reading reflects the subordinations pattern of societal relationships in force at the time. Notice, however, that this is not the distinctly Christian element in the household code presented here. The Christian community, including our own, is never exempt from cultural conditioning. The inspiring heart of this passage, however, portrays the love of husband and wife as so special that it can be compared analogously to the great love of Christ for the Church.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

Brothers and sisters:

Rejoice in the Lord always.

I shall say it again: rejoice!

Your kindness should be known to all.

The Lord is near.

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
make your requests known to God.

Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding
will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters,
whatever is true, whatever is honorable,
whatever is just, whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious,
if there is any excellence
and if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things.

Keep on doing what you have learned and received
and heard and seen in me.

Then the God of peace will be with you.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

"For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, don't worry!" This is what Saint Paul could be saying to you if you choose the Philippians passage for your wedding liturgy. He describes in a few lines the Christian formula for peace of heart in all circumstances. "Have no anxiety at all," he says. Looking back on your experience of life so far and looking ahead to the challenges, known and unknown, in your life together, an anxiety-free life may seem like a fool's dream. Yet, that is what is promised us in this inspired reading. The formula for peace sounds simple: pray. Pray, first of all, for stronger faith and trust that "the Lord is near." Pray for yourselves and for others. Don't hesitate to ask for what you need but (and this is the key to the formula) do it in a context of gratitude, or thanksgiving. It can be correctly said that gratitude is the foundational Christian attitude. People who habitually count their blessings and give thanks to God are fundamentally peaceful people. Try it. Try living just one day conscious that all you are and have is pure gift. You will then understand why the central prayer of the Church is Eucharist-thanksgiving, reverent acknowledgement of God's dominion and extraordinary love. The peace of God that surpasses all understanding does not mean simply the absence of conflict. It is deeper than that, a gift from God that is beyond our mind's calculations, yet is promised to those who are grateful and who pray.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians

Brothers and sisters:

Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience,
bearing with one another and forgiving one another,
if one has a grievance against another;
as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.

And over all these put on love,
that is, the bond of perfection.

And let the peace of Christ control your hearts,
the peace into which you were also called in one Body.

And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another,
singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
with gratitude in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, in word or in deed,
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

This is another household code but some distinctive Christian elements in human relationships are highlighted in it. In the wedding liturgy, special emphasis might be placed on the special need of forgiveness in love relationships. It is God's love and forgiveness of us that is the reason for and the model of our forgiveness of another. The author urges us to let the word of Christ dwell in us and to speak with each other with the wisdom granted us by the Spirit. Communication on a regular, sustained basis is absolutely essential to a healthy marriage.

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brothers and sisters:

Let mutual love continue.

Do not neglect hospitality,

for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.

Be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their imprisonment,

and of the ill-treated as of yourselves,

for you also are in the body.

Let marriage be honored among all

and the marriage bed be kept undefiled.

Let your life be free from love of money

but be content with what you have,

for he has said, *I will never forsake you or abandon you.*

Thus we may say with confidence:

The Lord is my helper,

and I will not be afraid.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

These ethical admonitions at the conclusion of the letter to the Hebrews apply to all people, but for those entering marriage they are singularly appropriate: maintaining mutual love for one another, offering hospitality in your new home—your domestic church, not being so preoccupied with one another that you forget the marginalized and are unable to identify with them, fidelity to one another in sexual matters, being content with what you have, not making money more important than it deserves to be.

What supports this kind of Christian married life are the gifts of faith and trust in God's promises, such as: "I will never forsake you or abandon you." Clearly marriage, which should be honored by all, demands regular listening to the Word of God and celebration of the sacred mysteries entrusted to us so that one will be constantly reminded of how much God loves us and how faithful God has always been to the promises made to God's people. If a couple is grounded in gratitude to God, it is much easier for them in their married life to be light for one another and a sign of God's kingdom to the world.

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Peter

Beloved:

You wives should be subordinate to your husbands so that,
even if some disobey the word,
they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct
when they observe your reverent and chaste behavior.

Your adornment should not be an external one:
braiding the hair, wearing gold jewelry, or dressing in fine clothes,
but rather the hidden character of the heart,
expressed in the imperishable beauty
of a gentle and calm disposition,
which is precious in the sight of God.

For this is also how the holy women who hoped in God
once used to adorn themselves
and were subordinate to their husbands;
thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him "lord."

You are her children when you do what is good
and fear no intimidation.

Likewise, you husbands should live with your wives in understanding,
showing honor to the weaker female sex,
since we are joint heirs of the gift of life,
so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Finally, all of you, be of one mind, sympathetic,
loving toward one another, compassionate, humble.

Do not return evil for evil, or insult for insult;
but, on the contrary, a blessing, because to this you were called,
that you might inherit a blessing.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

The first part of this household code is directed to Christian women whose spouses are pagan. It suggests that by their conduct they might win over their husbands to the faith. There follows a diatribe against the use of cosmetics! If one can make allowances for the cultural setting of this reading which calls woman "the weaker sex" and extols Sarah who called her husband her master, the reading does commend some important Christian virtues that every marriage relationship should take to heart, in particular, not returning wrong for wrong or anger for anger, but returning a blessing when one has been harmed. The successful marriage is one which seeks the truly good things in life: a forgiving atmosphere, peace in the home, fidelity and hospitality.

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Children, let us love not in word or speech
but in deed and truth.

Now this is how we shall know that we belong to the truth
and reassure our hearts before him
in whatever our hearts condemn,
for God is greater than our hearts and knows everything.

Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us,
we have confidence in God
and receive from him whatever we ask,
because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.

And his commandment is this:
we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,
and love one another just as he commanded us.

Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them,
and the way we know that he remains in us
is from the Spirit that he gave us.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

If we do what God commands, we will abide in God. Sometimes it is not an easy thing to know what God's desires are for us or for others. This reading addresses this situation and reminds us that even if we are uncertain as to how we stand before God, we should trust that God understands us better than we know ourselves. If we have faith in Jesus and try to love one another as God loves us, we should be confident that God will care for us. Couples will have to make many decisions, the rightness or wrongness of which may not always be clear. A well-informed conscience, marked by honesty, by careful inquiry and by prayer, will guarantee peace of mind. But our love must not reside in words alone; it must issue in deeds.

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Beloved, let us love one another,
because love is of God;
everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.
Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.
In this way the love of God was revealed to us:
God sent his only begotten Son into the world
so that we might have life through him.
In this is love:
not that we have loved God, but that he loved us
and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.
Beloved, if God so loved us,
we also must love one another.
No one has ever seen God.
Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us,
and his love is brought to perfection in us.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

The author can testify that the Christian community believes that God is love because they have seen and felt the Father's love in Jesus, his son. Only the person who loves, the reading goes on to say, can truly know God because God is love. The invitation to love which marriage is, is an invitation to enter more deeply as time goes by into the mystery of your marriage partner and into the mystery that is God. It is the outpouring of God's love for us that brought us into being and enables us to live and love. Since we are made in God's image and likeness, we are called to imitate the love of God. Since God loved us first, we are called to love others first. We love others not because they love us, but because they are in themselves beautiful creations of our Father and worthy of our love as they are the objects of his.

A reading from the Book of Revelation

I, John, heard what sounded like the loud voice
of a great multitude in heaven, saying:
"Alleluia!
Salvation, glory, and might belong to our God."
A voice coming from the throne said:
"Praise our God, all you his servants,
and you who revere him, small and great."
Then I heard something like the sound of a great multitude
or the sound of rushing water or mighty peals of thunder,
as they said:
"Alleluia!
The Lord has established his reign,
our God, the almighty.
Let us rejoice and be glad
and give him glory.
For the wedding day of the Lamb has come,
his bride has made herself ready.
She was allowed to wear
a bright, clean linen garment."
(The linen represents the righteous deeds of the holy ones.)
Then the angel said to me,
"Write this:
Blessed are those who have been called
to the wedding feast of the Lamb.

The word of the Lord.

Commentary:

The lamb is the symbol of Jesus in the Book of Revelation. This passage is a hopeful and faith-filled look into the future of our world when it will be transformed into a kingdom of peace and justice. It is a song of joy at the nuptials between Christ and his bride, the Church, at the end of time. Marriage can be and ought to be a foretaste, for the couple and for those who are touched by them, of that special time of union and peace. That is its prophetic character. Not only is marriage, therefore, a symbol of the mystical union now existing between Christ and his Church, but it points to the final union between the Messiah and the redeemed. Some commentators attribute the custom of the bride wearing white and to the white clothing of the saints who appear in the Book of Revelation.

Universal Prayers (Prayers of the Faithful)

Option #1

Presider:

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.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

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

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. R.

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. R.

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. R.

(Reader remains at microphone until prayer is concluded with "Amen.")

Presider:

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.

R. Amen

Universal Prayers (Prayers of the Faithful)

Option #2

Presider:

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.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

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

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. R.

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

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

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

(Reader remains at microphone until prayer is concluded with "Amen.")

Presider:

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.

R. Amen

Music Policy

The Marriage Rite is a Sacrament of the Church, a solemn exchange of vows between a bride and a groom, and an act of worship on the part of all those present to offer thanks and praise for God's blessings on the couple's life together as husband and wife. All the music before, during, and after the wedding liturgy reflect the Christian meaning of the Rite. Therefore, all music must be taken from the treasury of sacred repertoire.

Sacred music is sung prayer - put simply, music that has been created in petition or thanks to God. It is important to present sacred music for your wedding liturgy, while reserving favorite cultural and/or popular music for your reception.

While only Cathedral staff organists will play for your wedding, and preferably only Cathedral cantors sing for your wedding; the use of an outside singer, while not encouraged, is permitted. The singer should be a professional singer who is trained in sacred literature. The Cathedral is an immense space and requires a trained singer, not just a friend or a relative with a "nice voice." To hire our organist and one of our cantors, please ask the liturgy staff for a list of musicians and cantors.

Additional musicians. Most popular are trumpet, violin, or flute. Prices vary greatly. Additional singers or a small choir can be engaged as well. For further information you may contact the Director of Music.

Outside soloists and instrumentalists are allowed to perform under the following conditions:

1. Musical selections are to be made or approved by the Director of Music.
2. There is a fee for additional meetings and rehearsals with outside musicians in addition to the regular fee for the organist.
3. Any vocalists and instrumentalists should be experienced, professional musicians. A CD or mp3 may be requested by the Director of Music.

All music fees (organist, cantor, instrumentalists, choir, and extra rehearsal time) must be paid by or any time prior to your wedding rehearsal.

Call the parish office at 320-251-1840 x2 for the Director of Music.

Preludes

Air (*Bach*)
La Grace (*Telemann*)
Sheep May Safely Graze (*Bach*)
Bist du bei mir (*Stölzel, attr. Bach*)
Arioso (*Bach*)
St. Anthony Chorale (*Brahms, attr. Haydn*)
Largo (*Handel*)
C Major Prelude (*Bach*)

Processionals

Canon in D (*Pachelbel*)
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (*Bach*)
Prince of Denmark's March or Trumpet Voluntary (*Clarke, attr. Purcell*)
Air (*Handel*)
Trumpet Tune (*Clarke, attr. Purcell*)
Prelude (*Charpentier*)
Nuptial March (*Moore*)
Trumpet Tune in D (*Johnson*)

Entrance Chant (Gathering Hymn/Song)

God, Who Created Hearts to Love	Tune name: LASST UNS ERFREUEN
Joyful, Joyful We Adore You	Tune name: HYMN TO JOY
God of Love, Embrace Your People	Tune name: HYMN TO JOY
Love Divine All Loves Excelling	Tune name: HYFRYDOL
Love Has Brought Us Here Together	Tune name: HYFRYDOL
Here Us Now, Our God and Father	Tune name: HYFRYDOL
God, in the Planning	Tune name: SLANE
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	Tune name: LOBE DEN HERREN
This Is a Miracle-Moment	Tune name: LOBE DEN HERREN
Let's Praise the Creator	Tune name: KREMSER
God is Here! As We His People	Tune name: ABBOT'S LEIGH
Love is the Sunlight	Tune name: BUNESSAN
All People That on Earth Do Dwell	Tune name: OLD HUNDREDTH
For the Beauty of the Earth	Tune name: DIX

Worship 632

Gloria

Various settings are used depending on the Liturgical Season. (*chosen by the Director of Music*)

Responsorial Psalm

(The Responsorial Psalm is always sung and is typically based on the First Reading. Please indicate your preferred text. The Director of Music will work with the musicians to select an appropriate musical setting.)

Psalm 33: The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord

Psalm 34: I will bless the Lord at all times

or Taste and see the goodness of the Lord

Psalm 103: The Lord is kind and merciful

or The Lord's kindness is everlasting

Psalm 128: Blessed are those who fear the Lord

or May the Lord bless and protect us all the days of our lives

or Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways

Psalm 148: Let all praise the name of the Lord

Easter Season

Psalm 118: Give thanks to the Lord

or This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

Gospel Acclamation

Various settings are used depending on the Liturgical Season.

Reception of the Consent

The Alleluia (Gospel Acclamation) is repeated.

Hymn or Canticle of Praise (following the Blessing of Rings)

Proclaim the Greatness of God/Magnificat (<i>Chepponis</i>)		Worship 123
My Heart Sings Out/Magnificat	KINGSFOLD	Ritual Song 18
God, We Praise You!	Tune name: NETTLETON	Worship 599
Praise the Lord!	Tune name: HYFRYDOL	Worship 604
You Heavens, Adore Him		
Love Divine All Loves Excelling	Tune name: HYFRYDOL	Worship 642
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You	Tune name: HYMN TO JOY	Worship 611
O God, Beyond All Praising	Tune name: THAXTED	Worship 627
New Songs of Celebration	Tune name: RENDEZ A DIEU	Worship 606
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven	Tune name: LAUDA ANIMA	Worship 610
Sing Praise to the Lord	Tune name: LAUDATE DOMINUM	Worship 612
Holy God, We Praise Thy Name	Tune name: GROSSER GOTT	Worship 614
For the Beauty of the Earth	Tune name: DIX	Worship 632
Now Thank We All Our God	Tune name: NUN DANKET	Worship 637
Nuptial Blessing (<i>Joncas</i>)		

Preparation of the Gifts and Altar

Instrumental (*chosen by accompanist*)

Sanctus, Mystery of Faith, Great Amen, Angus Dei

Various settings are used depending on the Liturgical Season.

Communion Chant (Communion Hymns and Songs)

God is Love (<i>Proulx</i>)		Worship 700
Make of Our Hands A Thone (<i>Warner</i>)		
I Receive the Living God	Tune name: LIVING GOD	Worship 923
Draw Near (<i>Janco</i>)		Worship 935
You Satisfy the Hungry Heart	Tune name: BICENTENNIAL	Worship 939
Take and Eat (<i>Joncas</i>)		Worship 940
Eat This Bread (<i>Taize</i>)		Worship 943
Taste and See (<i>Guimont, Proulx, Kelly</i>)		Worship 945
Life-Giving Bread, Saving Cup (<i>Chepponis</i>)		Worship 956

Recessionals

Hornpipe (*Handel*)
Rondeau (*Mouret*)
Ode to Joy (*Beethoven*)
La Réjouissance (*Handel*)
Psalm XIX (*Marcello*)
Rigaudon (*Campra*)

Solos AND Duets (for Preludes, Prep of Gifts and Post Communion)

A Wedding Song (*Savoy*) – based on Song of Songs 8:6
Ave Maria (*Schubert*)
By My Side (*Porter*)
God Is in His Holy Place (*Vogt*)
Here in the Spirit's Presence (*Handel/arr. Rowan*)
I Am Always with You (*Biery*)
May God Keep and Bless You (*Haugen/Tice*)
May Love Be Ours, O Lord, duet (*Williams*)– based on I Corinthians
May the Grace of Christ Our Savior (*Bach/arr. Lee/Silhavy*)
Song of Songs (*Cooney*)– based on Song of Songs
The Lord Bless You and Keep You (*Young*)– based on Numbers 6: 24-26
When Love Is Found (*Connolly*)
When Love Is Found – Hymn tune: O WALY WALY
Beloved, God's Chosen (*Cherwien/Haugen*)– based on Colossians 3: 12-17
God beyond Glory (*Iona Community*)

God, in the Planning (*Bell*) – Hymn tune: SLANE
In Love We Choose to Live (*Cotter*)– based on I Corinthians 13
Love Is a Longing (*Hudson*)– Hymn tune: SLANE
Love Is the Sunlight (*Jacobson*) – Hymn tune: BUNESSAN
Not for Tongues of Heaven's Angels (*Joncas*)

MARY STAT-
UE

ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL

B=Minister of Eucharistic Bread C=Minister of Blood of Christ
Use cross aisle positions only for a full church
Capacity: 643 Main Level, 82 Balcony = 725 Total

TABERNACLE

ALTAR

pulpit

S. Door to
Tower, Stairs
& Restroom

N. Door to
Elevator &
Restroom

C4

B4



Row 1	10 people
Row 2	7 people
Row 3	10 people
Row 4	10 people
Row 5	10 people
Row 6	9 people
Row 7	7 people
Row 8	10 people
Row 9	10 people
Row 10	10 people
Row 11	9 people
Row 12	9 people

C
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R

Row 1	10 people
Row 2	7 people
Row 3	10 people
Row 4	10 people
Row 5	10 people
Row 6	8 people
Row 7	7 people
Row 8	10 people
Row 9	10 people
Row 10	10 people
Row 11	9 people
Row 12	9 people

Row 1	5 people
Row 2	5 people
Row 3	5 people
Row 4	5 people
Row 5	5 people

C8

CROSS

B6

B5

AISLE

C7

Row 1	6 people
Row 2	6 people
Row 3	6 people
Row 4	6 people
Row 5	6 people
Row 6	6 people
Row 7	6 people
Row 8	6 people
Row 9	6 people
Row 10	6 people
Row 11	6 people
Row 12	6 people
Row 13	6 people
Row 14	6 people
Row 15	6 people

Row 13	10 people
Row 14	8 people
Row 15	7 people
Row 16	10 people
Row 17	10 people
Row 18	10 people
Row 19	9 people
Row 20	7 people
Row 21	10 people
Row 22	10 people
Row 23	10 people
Row 24	9 people

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Row 13	10 people
Row 14	8 people
Row 15	7 people
Row 16	10 people
Row 17	10 people
Row 18	10 people
Row 19	8 people
Row 20	7 people
Row 21	10 people
Row 22	10 people
Row 23	10 people
Row 24	9 people

Row 1	4 people
Row 2	6 people
Row 3	6 people
Row 4	6 people
Row 5	6 people
Row 6	6 people
Row 7	6 people
Row 8	6 people
Row 9	6 people
Row 10	6 people
Row 11	6 people
Row 12	6 people
Row 13	6 people
Row 14	6 people
Row 15	6 people

REGISTRATION
AREA

GATHERING AREA

GATHERING AREA

REGISTRATION
AREA

FOYER

STAIRS TO BASEMENT

S. CENTER DOOR

CENTER DOOR

N. CENTER DOOR

STAIRS TO BASEMENT

Updated 05-07-13