



the DIOCESE of  
EAST ANGLIA

# MARRIAGE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Information for Catholics who are living in the  
Diocese of East Anglia and who want to be  
married in East Anglia, or in England & Wales,  
or anywhere around the world.

This document is divided into two parts:

**Part A:**  
**General Information About Marriage in the Catholic Church**  
**(page 3)**

**Part B:**  
**Marriage Preparation in the Diocese of East Anglia**  
**(page 8)**

For all queries please contact the Marriage and Family Life Coordinator:  
Antonia Braithwaite [mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk)

**~~~ What is Marriage? ~~~**

"The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament."

- Catechism of the Catholic Church 1601

God himself is the author of marriage. The mutual love of husband and wife, due to their creation as man and woman, is an image of God's unfailing love for mankind.

The marriage service is a solemn and moving ceremony in which the man and woman pledge their word to God and to each other to be loyal and faithful until death.

Whenever both partners are baptised Christians the grace of the Sacrament is conferred

## Part A:

### General Information about Marriage in the Catholic Church

#### **1. What should we do first?**

First, contact your Parish Priest and begin discussing your wedding plans, your situation and the wedding dates you are interested in. Do not book reception venues, flowers, or other arrangements without first speaking to the Parish Priest and setting a date for your wedding in the Church.

If either of you has been married before, you must disclose this to the Priest before making any arrangements.

The Diocese of East Anglia requires at least 6 months' notice of your intention to marry.

#### **2. Are there any dates when we cannot be married?**

Marriage cannot be celebrated on Good Friday or Holy Saturday (i.e. the Friday and Saturday before Easter Sunday).

#### **3. Can we marry on a beach, in a hotel, or at a venue that is not a Church?**

No. While it may seem romantic to marry where you proposed or where family and friends can enjoy a holiday, a Catholic marriage is a solemn promise made before God. You are asking for His blessing for the rest of your life together. Therefore, the most appropriate place for a Catholic marriage is in the house of God—a Catholic Church.

Only in rare and serious circumstances, the Bishop may permit a wedding to take place in “another suitable place.” Examples include situations such as a hospital bedside if one of the parties is gravely ill, or in cases of war or natural disaster.

#### **4. Can we get married in a Christian Church that isn't Catholic?**

Possibly. Catholics are ordinarily required to be married in a Catholic Church. However, if there is a sufficiently important reason, the Bishop may grant a, so called, *Dispensation from Canonical Form*, allowing the wedding to take place in another Christian church.

Acceptable reasons may include a close family connection, such as the father of one of the parties being a Baptist minister or Church of England pastor. Aesthetic preferences alone (e.g. "it's a prettier church") are not sufficient.

It is good pastoral practice for the Catholic Priest to be invited to give the Nuptial Blessing at the end of the ceremony, as a sign of support and Christian unity. Your Parish Priest may be happy to do this if he is available.

Please note: even if a Catholic is marrying in a non-Catholic church, attendance at a Catholic marriage preparation course is still required.

#### **5. My fiancé is a non-Christian (Muslim, Hindu, etc). Can we marry in the Catholic Church? Is extra paperwork needed?**

Yes, this is colloquially called an interfaith marriage.

Your Parish Priest will need to apply for a, so called, *Dispensation from Disparity of Cult* from the Bishop, but he will take care of that during your appointment. You do not need to prepare anything in advance.

#### **6. My fiancé is a non-Catholic baptised Christian. Can we get married in the Catholic Church?**

Yes, this is known colloquially as a mixed marriage.

You will need Permission from the Bishop of the Diocese, which your Parish Priest will arrange during your meeting. Again, no preparation is needed from you in advance.

#### **7. My fiancé is not baptised (e.g. Muslim, Hindu, Jewish etc), can we marry in their non-Christian place of worship?**

Whilst it is not impossible for a Catholic to marry someone who has not been baptised, or for the marriage to take place in a non-Christian place of worship, such cases require special permission, given only after very careful consideration in exceptional circumstances. This is because of difficulties which may arise during married life and bringing up children due to real differences in religious faith, practice, and values. In such cases, you are advised to speak to your parish priest as soon as possible who will then be able to help you explore what may be possible.

Each case will be looked at individually.

## **8. What does the Catholic Church say about marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics?**

Because the marriage establishes a bond between a man and a woman for their whole life, joining and unifying them in every way, the two spouses would ideally share the same religious conviction and practice, so that the unity and partnership of their marriage might be as complete as possible, and so they can be completely 'one' with each other in every aspect of their life.

However, the Church recognises that couples may fall in love across religious differences. While these differences are not seen as insurmountable, the Church cautions couples not to underestimate the challenges of mixed or interfaith marriages—especially as the years go by and when raising their children together.

Many Protestant pastors and other faith leaders also give this advice.

This is why in any marriage between a Catholic and non-Catholic, the Catholic fiancé is required to obtain special Permission or Dispensation from the Bishop in order to marry.

The Catholic fiancé will also be required to sign a Declaration saying that they will not be pressured into abandoning their Catholic faith, they will remain faithful to their Catholic duties as a parent which includes raising the children in the faith. This Declaration is signed during the appointment with the Priest when the Pre Nuptial paperwork is completed.

The Church does *not* require the non-Catholic to convert to Catholicism but it would be helpful for them to have a good understanding of their Catholic fiancé's faith.

Be sure to discuss together the importance of your faith, and the promise that you will make to raise your children in the Catholic Church and what that will involve in practice (that is; baptism, weekly mass, praying together, First Holy Communion classes, Confirmation, bringing them to Confession, raising them Catholic etc).

If the non-Catholic feels similarly strongly about raising the children in *their* particular faith, you will need to have serious discussion about the matter before proceeding further with your wedding plans.

## **9. Can we write our own vows?**

No. Because Catholic marriage involves specific promises, the wording of the vows must reflect the Church's understanding of marriage. This ensures that the couple knows exactly what they are committing to.

However, couples are welcome to express their personal love and hopes for the future during wedding reception speeches.

## **10. What kind of service can we have for our wedding?**

You may choose one of the following:

- *Wedding Service* – Includes hymns, prayers, Scripture readings, exchange of vows, and the Nuptial Blessing. Does not include Holy Communion.
- *Nuptial Mass* – A full Mass that includes the wedding ceremony and the Eucharist (Holy Communion).

## **11. Can we choose our own readings?**

Yes, but they must be from the Bible. A list of suggested Scripture readings is available at the end of this document.

If you have a poem or piece of writing that is meaningful to you, the reception is the best place to share it.

## **12. Can we choose our own music?**

Yes, but it should be sacred in character—whether modern or traditional.

Remember: your wedding is an act of worship, taking place in God's house. The music should reflect this. For this reason, non-religious music is not appropriate for a Church ceremony.

You will need to book the Church organist or pianist in advance. You may also be allowed to bring your own musicians if agreed with the Priest. A choir or cantor from the Church may also be available upon request.

## **13. Do our bridesmaids and best man have to be Catholic?**

No. The official witness on behalf of the Church is the Priest or Deacon. Your bridal party members are not official witnesses for the Church, so they do not need to be Catholic.

## **14. What preparation does the Church require?**

All couples must attend Catholic marriage preparation before their wedding. The course helps couples understand the sacred nature of the sacrament, the lifelong commitment involved, the gift and responsibilities of parenthood, amongst many other things.

See Part B of this document for details about the Diocese of East Anglia's preparation course.

### **15. Should we go to Confession before our wedding?**

Yes, it is highly recommended.

Just as you wouldn't arrive at your wedding physically unclean, your soul should also be cleansed for such a holy occasion. If you are aware of serious sins—such as sexual intercourse before marriage—you must go to Confession before receiving Holy Communion.

Do not be afraid. The priest is bound by the seal of confession and will never repeat anything you say. He is there to welcome you back to God and offer healing.

### **16. Practicalities for the Wedding Day**

- Organist – Contact via the Parish Priest. You may bring your own with permission.
- Choir/Cantor – Ask the organist about availability and fees.
- Altar Servers – May be available depending on the Church.
- Flowers – Ask the Priest about the parish flower team or bring your own.
- Order of Service – The Priest can help with this; you may need to print it yourself.
- Ushers – Useful to welcome guests, hand out Orders of Service, and assist with seating. Traditionally in the UK, the bride's guests sit on the left and the groom's on the right, but nowadays guests are often encouraged to sit where they like.

### **17. Who will be the Priest at our wedding?**

Normally, the Parish Priest of the Church where the wedding takes place will celebrate the Nuptial Mass or Wedding Service. If another Priest (e.g. a relative or friend) is to conduct the wedding, this must be arranged well in advance with the Parish Priest. Deacons may also conduct a Wedding Service (but not a Nuptial Mass).

### **18. Do we need to make a donation to the Priest?**

There is no official charge for a Catholic wedding (unlike in the Church of England, which has fixed fees).

Some parishes suggest a fixed donation to help cover Church running costs and administrative work. Others leave it up to the couple. It is customary to give the Priest and key participants a monetary thank-you gesture. Also consider thanking the organist, florist, altar servers, choir, etc., for their time and contribution.

## Part B:

### Marriage Preparation in the Diocese of East Anglia

Welcome to marriage preparation in the Diocese of East Anglia! This programme is an extensive and comprehensive preparation for Catholic marriage.

For all queries please contact the Marriage and Family Life Coordinator:  
Antonia Braithwaite [mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk)

The full marriage preparation course consists of both:

1. One full **Saturday Day**.

During this day we will cover the theology of marriage and marital love, as well as practical marriage skills including communication issues, financial management, conflict resolution, addressing the past, theology of the body, sexuality and more.

You do not need to bring anything along to this day, just yourselves!

These Saturday sessions take place in *Our Lady Immaculate and St Etheldreda Church* in Newmarket. You only need to attend one day. Each Saturday Day is identical in content, please choose the date that works best for you.

At the end of the Saturday Day you will be given a **certificate** that you should show as proof of attendance to the Priest who is arranging your paperwork.

**\*Please book you place on the Saturday Day HERE\***

***and also***

2. Four sessions using the Diocese's own ***So Great A Mystery*** course. These should be done with you and your priest, in your own parish. This course offers a catechetical introduction to the sacramental nature of Catholic marriage. For these four sessions you need to contact your local Parish Priest. *(please note: not all parishes offer these four sessions all year round, so it might not be possible to do it.).*

If you are unable to attend any preparation courses, either in your Parish or the Saturday Day, or have any other questions, please contact Antonia Braithwaite.



## SATURDAY DAY DATES

They all take place at:

**Our Lady Immaculate & St Etheldreda Church  
14 Exeter Road  
Newmarket CB8 8LT**

Upcoming Dates:

**September 13<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**November 8<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**January 31<sup>st</sup> 2026**

**March 7<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**April 11<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**May 9<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**September 19<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**November 7<sup>th</sup> 2026**

Click [here](#) to book.

## PAYMENT

**Cost of Marriage Preparation - £125 per couple**

Please see below for payment details.

**\*\*\* *If you have financial difficulties please don't hesitate to contact Antonia and we can work something out for you* \*\*\***



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **18. Do we have to do a marriage preparation course?**

Yes, all couples are required to receive preparation for marriage if they want to get married in the Catholic Church, regardless of where in the world they are getting married.

### **19. What does marriage preparation in our Diocese consists of?**

Marriage preparation consists of *both*:

a. One *Saturday Day* (click [here](#) to book this).

*and also*

b. The *So Great A Mystery* course in your local parish (contact your local Parish Priest.)

*NB: Not all parishes offer this course all year round*

## 20. What is the cost of marriage preparation?

The cost is **£125** per couple. Please contact Antonia if you have financial difficulties.  
Please pay either by:

<u><b>Bank Transfer</b></u>  East Anglia Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee Natwest, City Branch, Norwich  Sort Code: 60-15-31 Account No: 08741697  Please make sure you include the reference <u>'MFL Marriage PREP'</u> and your <u>name</u> .	<u><b>Cheque</b></u>  Made out to: East Anglia Roman Catholic Trustee  Please write: "MFL marriage prep" on the back,  Post it to: Paul Wilson, 21 Ugate, Poringland, Norwich NR12 7SH.
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## 21. Can I attend either the course or the Saturday Day?

The full course consists of both the Saturday Day course and also the parish-based So Great A Mystery course, as they cover different topics.

NB: Some parishes are unable to offer the So Great A Mystery course all year round, in which case the Saturday Day course alone will be accepted.

## 22. Do I have to attend the course before the Saturday Day?

No, they cover different topics so it doesn't matter which one you do first.

## 23. How do I book for the *So Great A Mystery* parish course?

These classes are done at a local parish level, so please contact your local Catholic parish church.

## 24. What if only one of us can attend the Saturday Day?

The Saturday Day consists of couple work which you both do together on the day, so it is vital that you both attend the Saturday Day together. But if one of you is abroad and therefore unable to attend, then you can come alone. Please tell Antonia  
[mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk)

**25. What if we are unable attend either the Saturday Day or the parish sessions?**

If you are unable to attend any of the face-to-face courses offered by the Diocese, then please contact Antonia Braithwaite [mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk)



**26. How soon before my wedding do I need to do the marriage preparation course?**

You can attend a marriage preparation course any time about two years before your wedding.

But please note that the official paperwork can only be dated a maximum of six months before your wedding date.

**27. How soon before my wedding do I need to meet with the Priest to do my paperwork?**

The Church paperwork which the Priest fills in with you cannot be dated more than six months before your wedding.



## **28. What happens once we have finished the marriage preparation course?**

Once you have completed the marriage preparation course, you will receive a certificate, and you can meet with your Parish Priest to finalise your paperwork.

Couples need to meet with their local Parish Priest in East Anglia to do their paperwork even if they are getting married elsewhere, as it is the responsibility of the Diocese where the couple live to do their documentation, not the Diocese in which they are getting married. The completed paperwork will then be sent to the Diocese where the couple are planning on getting married.



## 29. What paperwork do I need to have ready for the appointment with the Priest?

At the appointment with the Priest please ensure you each have the following documents with you: (NB: not all of these may be relevant to you).

Please note: originals copies only, no photocopies or scans. They do not need to be translated into English; the original language is acceptable.

- ☐ Marriage Preparation Certificate of Completion
- ☐ Passport/ID
- ☐ A cheque for £20 made payable to 'RC Diocese of East Anglia' (or cash in an envelope) (if you are getting married outside of East Anglia. See questions below for more information).
- ☐ Baptism certificate\*

\*This must be an original. It does not need to be translated into English. You will need to contact the Church where you were baptised and explain that you are getting married and ask them to issue you with a baptism certificate for marriage. This certificate should be dated a maximum of 6 months before your wedding date and it needs to indicate the date and place of baptism, whether or not you have been Confirmed as well as any details regarding previous marriages or ordination or religious vows.

- ☐ **Pre-Nuptial Information Form (Click here to find PDF download)** \*\*

\*\* Fill in all your personal details but do not sign anything on this form. You will sign it in front of your Parish Priest.

- ☐ **Statutory Declaration of Freedom to Marry Form \*\*\* (Click here to find PDF download)**

\*\*\*Print off one copy each. This form needs to be completed before a Solicitor/Public Notary/Commissioner of Oaths. You need to Google a convenient one and make an appointment with any one of them. Then take the forms with you and your fiancé and you need to sign it in front of them.

NB: If you are already civilly married you do not need to complete this form. Also, if you are getting married abroad and are required to prove your legal freedom to marry in that country/ consulate/ embassy then that paperwork is sufficient, you don't need to do another one.

- ☐ Annulment paperwork (if relevant)
- ☐ Legal marriage certificate (if you are already civilly married)

**30. My fiancé was baptised in a non-Catholic Church, does s/he need to obtain a baptism certificate dated six months before our wedding?**

No. It would be ideal if they were able to get a certificate dated six months before the wedding confirming their baptism, but if they are unable to, then their original certificate from the day they were baptised will suffice even if it is many years old.

**31. I am getting married outside this Diocese, can the Priest in that Church do my paperwork?**

The Church norms are that the Diocese where you live is responsible for doing your paperwork. This will then be sent to the Diocese where you are getting married. So you should contact your local Parish Priest here in East Anglia to do your paperwork.

**32. What happens at the appointment with my Parish Priest?**

Once you have completed the marriage preparation course you will need to make an appointment with your Parish Priest or his Secretary and take with you all the relevant paperwork listed in Question 29 above (this is vital!).

In front of the priest you then sign the Declaration at the bottom of Page 2 of the Pre-Nuptial Information Form, and if only one of you is a Catholic, then the Catholic must make the promise before the priest on the bottom of Page 3.

**33. What happens next if I am getting married:**

- **in my local Catholic Parish here in East Anglia**
- **in another Catholic Church in East Anglia**
- **in another Catholic Church in England and Wales?**

If you are getting married in your own Catholic Parish here in East Anglia then the signed paperwork stays with your Parish Priest (unless you require a Dispensation or Permission, in which case he will send the paperwork to the Chancellor, and it will then be returned to the Parish Priest).

If you are getting married in a different Catholic Parish in the Diocese of East Anglia where you are not parishioners then your Parish Priest will grant permission for you to do so (page 4 on the Pre-Nuptial Form) and then send the paperwork to the Parish Priest in East Anglia where you intend to marry (unless you require a Dispensation or Permission, in which case he will send the paperwork to the Chancellor, and it will then be returned to the Parish Priest).

If you are getting married in a Catholic Parish outside of East Anglia, but within the Episcopal Conference of England and Wales, then your Parish Priest will grant permission for you to do so (page 4 on the Pre-Nuptial Form) and send your paperwork to the Chancellor, who will then send it directly to the parish where the marriage will take place.

NB: you will need to provide a £20 cheque made payable to 'RC Diocese of East Anglia' or cash in an envelope with your name, contact details, parish details, and wedding date/location on the front. Give this cheque/cash to your Priest, which he will send to the Chancellor.



### **34. What is the process if I am getting married somewhere else in the world and not in England and Wales?**

Once you have completed the marriage preparation courses and signed all the documents in front of your Parish Priest, he must send them all to the Chancellor including a £20 cheque which you should provide made payable to 'RC Diocese of East Anglia', or cash in an envelope with your name, contact, parish details, and wedding date/location on the front.

The Chancellor will check all your documentation to see it is correct and deal with any Dispensations or Permissions that you require. He will then prepare a letter to the Chancellor in the Diocese where you are intending to marry, wherever that may be around the world.

All this paperwork will then be sent back to your Parish Priest in East Anglia with an accompanying letter and a special envelope to be used by a courier service. Your Parish Priest will then give the documents to you and you are to arrange for a courier to send them abroad (everything will be addressed already).

The courier will provide you with a Tracking Number and then the Chancellor of the Diocese in which you will be married or a member of the Diocesan Curia will sign for it. It works beautifully so do not panic. Most couriers are able to deliver anywhere in the world within five working days. Once the paperwork has arrived at the Diocese where you will be married the Chancellor there will send it to the exact Parish where you will be married.

We aim for the paperwork to arrive about 4 weeks before the wedding date

PLEASE DO NOT send the documents using the Postal Service. Once post leaves this country there is no way of assuring it will reach its destination on time (we have experience of this happening!). It needs to be sent as a tracked delivery using a courier service (e.g. *DHL*).

PLEASE DO NOT give the documents to relatives to deliver by hand or try to take them personally yourself to the Diocese where you are getting married. We have had this happen and the documents will be rejected and refused by the receiving Diocese because they could have been interfered with. The documents are considered the **personal correspondence** of the Chancellor of East Anglia to the Chancellor in the receiving Diocese, so they must be couriered directly and not hand delivered.



**35. What is the timescale for the paperwork?**

The Priests will complete your paperwork only after you have completed your marriage preparation course.

If you are getting married abroad, we aim for it to arrive in the Diocese where you are getting married about *one month* before your wedding date.

**36. We are already civilly married, do we need to complete the Statutory Declaration of Freedom to Marry form?**

No. Please bring your civil marriage certificate to the appointment with the Priest.

**37. We have already completed a Statutory Declaration of Freedom to Marry form in a different country/embassy/consulate, do we need to do another one here?**

No, that will be acceptable. Please bring it to the appointment with the Priest.

**38. What is the earliest I can arrange to sign this paperwork with my Parish Priest?**

Maximum of six months before the wedding once you have completed the preparation course and have your certificates and paperwork ready.

But do make sure you have spoken to him already (via email or face-to-face after Mass) letting him know of your intentions to marry etc.

**39. We are from the Syro-Malabar Rite, do we need to do any extra paperwork?**

No

**40. I have been previously married but have now divorced and received an annulment. Do I still fill in the Declaration of Freedom to Marry form?**

Yes, but write on the form that you have received an annulment.

Make sure you bring your annulment paperwork with you to the appointment with the Priest.

**41. I was previously married but now my spouse is deceased.**

If there has been a previous spouse, who is now deceased, the priest will need a copy of their death certificate.

**42. I would like to be Confirmed, how can I go about organising that?**

It is a good thing to be Confirmed and you are encouraged to be confirmed before your wedding if possible. Contact your Parish Priest as soon as possible to speak to him about that.



### 43. Can you suggest any readings for our wedding ceremony?

You can usually choose your own readings for your wedding. These must be from the Bible.

The Liturgy of the Word during a Nuptial Mass consists of the following readings:

- A *First Reading* from the Old Testament
- A *Responsorial Psalm* (usually sung by a cantor while the congregation respond, or can be said)
- A *Second Reading* from the New Testament
- A *Gospel Reading* from one of the four Gospels
- Prayer of the Faithful

All readings must come from the Bible, and cannot be replaced by any other text.

Below I have listed suggestions for the First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Second Reading, Gospel and Prayer of the Faithful.

For even more suggestions [please click here](#)

Please discuss your selections with the Priest who will be celebrating your wedding.

**For all other questions, please contact Antonia Braithwaite**  
[mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk](mailto:mflcoordinator@rcdea.org.uk)

*God bless you on your wedding day and for your  
future marriage!*

## *Reading Suggestions*

### **OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

GENESIS 1:26-28, 31

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 divine image 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."

Go looked at everything he had made,

and he found it very good.

The word of the Lord

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

GENESIS 2:18-24

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 the 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.

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

GENESIS 24:48-51, 58-67

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The servant of Abraham said to Laban:

"Then 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.

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

TOBIT 7:6-14

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 that 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 your 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.

### **OLD TESTAMENT READING**

TOBIT 8:4b-8

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 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.

### **OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

PROVERBS 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

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.

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

SONG OF SONGS 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a

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 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 said 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.

**OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

SIRACH 26:1-4, 13-16 B8

A reading from the book of Sirach.

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 sou.

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.

**OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

JEREMIAH 31:31-32, 33-34

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.

### **Responsorial Psalm in a Catholic Wedding:**

At a Catholic wedding a cantor may sing the verses of the psalm, and the congregation sings the response.

The psalm might also be read out and not sung.

The book of Psalms is an ancient book of 150 prayers written as song. Some of the psalms were written as early as 900 years before the birth of Jesus.

#### **PSALM 33:12, 18, 20-21, 22**

R: The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.  
Blessed the nations whose God is the Lord,  
the people he has chosen for his own inheritance.  
But see, the eyes of the Lord are upon those who fear him,  
upon those who hope for his kindness.

R: The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

Our soul waits for the Lord,  
who is our help and our shield,  
For in him our hearts rejoice;  
In his holy name we trust.

R: The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us  
Who have put our hope in you.

R: The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

**PSALM 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9**

R: I will bless the Lord at all times. OR Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall be ever in my mouth.  
Let my soul glory in the Lord;  
the lowly will hear me and be glad.

R: I will bless the Lord at all times. OR Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Glorify the Lord with me,  
let us together extol his name.  
I sought the Lord, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.

R: I will bless the Lord at all times. OR Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Look to him that you may be radiant with joy,  
and your face may not blush with shame.  
When the poor one called out, the Lord heard,  
and from all his distress he saved him.

R: I will bless the Lord at all times. OR Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.  
Taste and see how good the Lord is;  
Blessed the man who takes refuge in him.

R: I will bless the Lord at all times. OR Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

**PSALM 103:1-2, 8, 13, 17-18a**

R: The Lord is kind and merciful. OR The Lord's kindness is everlasting for those who fear him.

Bless the Lord, O my soul;  
and all my being, bless his holy name.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits.

R: The Lord is kind and merciful. OR The Lord's kindness is everlasting for those who fear him.

Merciful and gracious is the Lord,  
slow to anger and abounding in kindness.  
As a father has compassion on his children,  
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

R: The Lord is kind and merciful. OR The Lord's kindness is everlasting for those who fear him.

But the kindness of the Lord is from eternity  
to eternity towards those who fear him,  
And his justice towards children's children  
among those who keep his covenant.

R: The Lord is kind and merciful. OR The Lord's kindness is everlasting for those who fear him.



**PSALM 112:1bc-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7b-8, 9**

R: Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord's commands.

Blessed the man who fears the Lord,  
who greatly delights in his commands.  
His prosperity shall be mighty upon the earth;  
the upright generation shall be blessed.

R: Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord's commands.

Wealth and riches shall be in his house;  
  
his generosity shall endure forever.  
Light shines through the darkness for the upright;  
he is gracious and merciful and just.

R: Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord's commands.

Well for the man who is gracious and lends,  
who conducts his affairs with justice;  
He shall never be moved;  
the just one shall be in everlasting remembrance  
An evil report he shall not fear.

R: Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord's commands.

His heart is firm, trusting in the Lord.  
His heart is steadfast; he shall not fear  
til he looks down upon his foes.

R: Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord's commands.

Lavishly he gives to the poor;  
his generosity shall endure forever;  
his horn shall be exalted in glory.

R: Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord's commands.

**PSALM 128:1-2, 3, 4-5**

R: Blessed are those who fear the Lord. OR See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

Blessed are you who fear the Lord,  
who walk in his ways!  
For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork;  
blessed shall you be, and favored.

R: Blessed are those who fear the Lord. OR See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine  
in the recesses of your home;  
Your children like olive plants  
around your table.

R: Blessed are those who fear the Lord. OR See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

Behold, thus is the man blessed  
who fears the Lord.  
The Lord bless you from Zion:  
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem  
all the days of your life.

R: Blessed are those who fear the Lord. OR See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

**PSALM 145:8-9, 10, 15, 17-18**

R: The Lord is compassionate towards all his works

The Lord is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger and of great kindness.  
The Lord is good to all  
and compassionate towards all his works.

R: The Lord is compassionate towards all his works

Let all your works give you thanks, O Lord,  
and let your faithful ones bless you.  
The eyes of all look hopefully to you  
and you give them their food in due season.

R: The Lord is compassionate towards all his works

The Lord is just in all his ways  
and holy in all his works  
The Lord is near to all who call upon him,  
to all who call upon him in truth.

R: The Lord is compassionate towards all his works

**PSALM 148:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-13a, 13c-14a**

R: Let all praise the name of the Lord.

Alleluia.

Praise the Lord from the heavens,  
praise him in the heights;  
Praise him, all you his angels,  
Praise him, all you his hosts.

R: Let all praise the name of the Lord.

Praise him, sun and moon;  
praise him, all you shining stars.  
Praise him, you highest heavens,  
and you waters above the heavens

R: Let all praise the name of the Lord.

You mountains and all you hills,  
you fruit trees and all your cedars;  
You wild beasts and all tame animals,  
you creeping things and winged fowl.

R: Let all praise the name of the Lord.

Let the kings of the earth and all peoples,  
  
the princes and all the judges of the earth,  
Young men too, and maidens,  
old men and boys,  
Praise the name of the Lord,  
for his name alone is exalted.

R: Let all praise the name of the Lord.

His majesty is above earth and heaven,  
and he has lifted his horn above the people.

R: Let all praise the name of the Lord.

## **Second Reading for a Catholic Wedding**

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

ROMANS 8:31-35, 37-39

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 who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, 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.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

ROMANS 12:1-2, 9-18 (Longer)

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

I urge you therefore, 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 honour. 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.

**NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

ROMANS 12:1-2, 9-13 (shorter)

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

I urge you therefore, 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 honour. 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.

**NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

ROMANS 15:1b-3a, 5-7, 13

A reading from the letter of 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

**NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

1 CORINTHIANS 6:13c-15a, 17-20

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.

**NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

1 CORINTHIANS 12:31-13:8a

A reading from the first letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

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, love 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.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

EPHESIANS 4:1-6

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Brothers and sisters: I, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace: one Body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The word of the Lord.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

EPHESIANS 5:2a, 21-33 – longer

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.



**NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

EPHESIANS 5:2a, 25-32 - shorter

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.

**NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9

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

**NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

COLOSSIANS 3:12 –17

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians.

Brothers and sisters: Put on then, 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.

**NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

HEBREWS 13:1-4a, 5-6b

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

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.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

1 PETER 3:1-9

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.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

1 JOHN 3:18-24 D12

A reading from the first letter of Saint John.

Children, let us love one another 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.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

1 JOHN 4:7-12

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 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.

### **NEW TESTAMENT READING:**

REVELATION 19:1, 5-9a

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.

### **Gospel Reading for a Catholic Wedding**

The final reading in a Catholic wedding is always chosen from one of the four Gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John . These were written during the latter half of the first century A.D. Each tells the story of Jesus through the memory of a distinct Christian community,

Many of the gospel readings for Catholic weddings are not explicitly about marriage but about the love of Christians for one another and about the call to discipleship. The passages remind us that Christian marriage is a particular way of living out one's vocation to love and to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

### **GOSPEL READING:**

MATTHEW 5:1-12a

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

MATTHEW 5:13-16

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

MATTHEW 7:21, 24-29 -longer

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. "Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined."

When Jesus finished these words, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

MATTHEW 7:21, 24-25 - shorter

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

MATTHEW 19:3-6

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

Pharisees approached Jesus, and tested him, saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?" He said in reply, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, man must not separate."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

MATTHEW 22:35-40

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

One of the Pharisees, a scholar of the law, tested Jesus by asking, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"

He said to him, "You shall 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 is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

MARK 10:6-9

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark.

Jesus said:

"From the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate."

The Gospel of the Lord

**GOSPEL READING:**

JOHN 2:1-11

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

There was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come."

His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."

Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from, although the servers who had drawn the water knew, the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him,

"Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now."

Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.



**GOSPEL READING:**

JOHN 15:9-12

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples: "As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If 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 joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

JOHN 15:12-16

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples: "This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

JOHN 17:20-26 - longer

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed: " I pray not only for my disciples, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me.

Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world also does not know you, but I know you, and they know that you sent me. I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**GOSPEL READING:**

JOHN 17:20-23 - shorter

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed: "Holy Father, I pray not only for my disciples, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me."

The Gospel of the Lord.

### **Catholic Wedding Prayer of the Faithful**

Here are some suggested words for the Prayer of the Faithful:

#### **Prayer of the Faithful Example A**

1. For the Church throughout the world. May our faith in the love God has for us be expressed in our love for one another. We pray to the Lord.
2. For peace in our world. May all lands that suffer violence and injustice find peace and reconciliation. We pray to the Lord.
3. For the poor, the homeless, and for those who are unemployed. May our care and concern for those in need be a sign of God's love. We pray to the Lord.
4. For the protection and sanctity of human life from conception until natural death. May all people be treated with the dignity they deserve. We pray to the Lord.
5. For all those preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage. May they grow in wisdom and grace, and see their vocation to married life as a sign of God's love. We pray to the Lord.
6. For N. and N., who begin their married life together this day. May they experience the love of God, the support of family and friends, and the blessing of children. We pray to the Lord.
7. For all those who have died, especially the relatives and friends of N. and N. and of all present for this wedding. May they enjoy perfect happiness and total fulfillment in eternal life. We pray to the Lord.

### **Prayer of the Faithful Example B**

1. For the Church and its leaders. May our commitment to the Gospel lead us to deepen our faith and trust in God. We pray to the Lord.

2. For our world and its leaders. May all people be treated with the dignity they deserve. We pray to the Lord.

3. For our country and those who defend it. May our men and women who serve in the military be kept safe from all harm. We pray to the Lord.

4. For those who are sick, lonely, or depressed. May they be strengthened by God's love and aided by friends and family. We pray to the Lord.

5. For all of our guests gathered here with us today. May they enjoy the warm company of family and friends and have safe travels on their journey home. We pray to the Lord.

6. For N. and N.. May they live long, blessed lives together; may their love grow stronger each and every day; and may they build a family rooted in faith and unconditional love. We pray to the Lord.

7. For N. and N. (fill in the names of your deceased loved ones) and all who have died. May they know the peace and fullness of eternal life with God. We pray to the Lord.

### **Prayer of the Faithful Example C**

1. For the Church all people of faith throughout the world. May our faith in the love God has for us be expressed in our love for one another. We pray to the Lord.
2. For peace in our world. May all lands that suffer violence and injustice find peace and reconciliation. We pray to the Lord.
3. For the poor, the homeless, and for those who are unemployed. May our care and concern for those in need be a sign of God's love. We pray to the Lord.
4. For the protection and sanctity of human life from conception until natural death. May all people be treated with the dignity they deserve as God's children. We pray to the Lord.
5. For all those preparing for marriage. May they grow in wisdom and grace, and reflect God's love to all around them. We pray to the Lord.
6. For N. and N., who begin their married life together this day. May they experience the love of God, the support of family and friends, and the blessings of children. We pray to the Lord.
7. For all those who have died, especially the relatives and friends of N. and N. and of all present for this wedding. May they enjoy perfect happiness and total fulfillment in eternal life. We pray to the Lord