

A WEDDING FROM THE HEART



**MARRIAGE SERVICE COMPILATION
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INTRODUCTION

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here together amidst God's creation and in the presence of God's Spirit to witness and celebrate the joining together of

_____ and

_____ in Holy Matrimony.

The covenant of marriage was established by God in creation. We read in Genesis that "God created people in God's own image; male and female God created them...and God blessed them."

Then with his presence and power Jesus graced a wedding at Cana of Galilee, and his sacrificial love gave us the example of the love of husband and wife.

And in first John we read, “Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and the one who loves is born of God and knows of God. If God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

How God’s relationship is with us is how we should all strive to be with one another. As God’s covenant with us is to be our God and we to be God’s people, so too now shall you _____ be _____ husband and you _____ be _____ wife.

This man and woman have not come to this moment alone. Many have contributed to this coming together. Family and friends are all part of what has created what is to take place at this moment. With gratitude and

Thanksgiving, _____ and _____ share the celebration of their marriage with everyone here assembled.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Dear God, look mercifully upon your children _____ and _____, and be generous with them so that in the unfolding veils of time, they may truly stand for one another as emblems of the incarnation of your love. Give them a sense of joy and excitement about what they are undertaking here; the ever-unfolding and beautiful work of refining their spirits in the presence of each other’s witness and of becoming the bearers of your love.

And knowing that this is a high and often challenging endeavor, that its rewards are often uncommon and invisible in ordinary day to day life, we pray for them the benediction of thy company and the boundless joy of living always in the midst of your grace O Lord.

Give them peace of heart and strength of spirit so they may honor the vows they make this day. And may the promises they make inspire and instruct each one of us who celebrates with them. In your name, O Lord, Amen.

MESSAGE ON MARRIAGE

Marriage is the joining of two lives, the physical, emotional and spiritual union of two human souls who have had separate families and histories. Marriage is now the merging of two life stories. Two individuals, each of whom has a unique and life-shaping past, willingly choose to set aside the solitary exploration of themselves to discover who they are in the presence of one another.

The person we choose to marry is someone we love, but his or her depths and intricacies we will come to know only in the long unraveling of time. Yet, we know enough about our beloved to know that we will come to enjoy one another even more, and become

even more of ourselves in one another's presence.

It is a journey of trust and friendship. To be married means we are not alone. There is now a parallel presence and spirit in all that we undertake. That is because in marrying, we promise to love not only as we feel right now, but also as we intend. In marriage we say not only, "I love you today," but also, "I will love you tomorrow; the next day, and always," Marriage is the bond that sets us free, free to be and to love. Our souls are protected; our hearts have come home.

In simple terms, this means that because we are safe in marriage we can risk; because we have been promised a future, we

can take extraordinary chances. Because we know we are loved, we can step beyond our fears; because we have been chosen, we can transcend our insecurities. We can make mistakes knowing we will not be forsaken; take missteps knowing someone will be there to catch us. In the experience of putting another human being in a position of equal value to our own, we touch the web of transcendence, the presence of the eternal.

For loving one another is the beginning of compassion, and compassion is participation in the divine. The compassionate, soul-changing loving of a single other human being connects us most profoundly to God, the creator of love. And it is in the practice of this

radiant spiritual love that true marriage calls forth the best in us, the most we can ever become.

This is a spiritual journey because it pertains to the deepest essence of our being. For it is unconditional love, such as the love of God for creation, which dissolves all fears and shatters all limitations. It is this which is the true gift and miracle of marriage.

SCRIPTURE

From I John 4: 7, 11-13, 18a, 19, 16b

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and the one who loves is born of God and knows God. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has

ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and God's love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in God and God in us, because God has given us of God's own Spirit. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. We love, because God first loved us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in the one who loves.

THE CHARGE AND PREPARATION TO VOWS

_____ and _____, I charge you with the creative challenge to keep alive the wonder of marriage. May you have the capacity to grow and to change together. May you maintain spontaneity, flexibility and

humor. I challenge you to give fully, to show your real feelings, to save time for each other, no matter what demands are made upon your day. I encourage you to see the meaning of life through the prism of your love; to nurture each to fullness and wholeness, and in learning to love each other more deeply, learn to also love the creation in which the mystery of your love has happened.

THE QUESTION

Will you _____, take _____, to be your wife? And from this time onward, be her faithful husband? Will you promise to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond? In faith

and commitment will you share with her all that is to come and all that is to be?

Will you _____, take _____, to be your husband? And from this time onward, be his faithful wife? Will you promise to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond? In faith and commitment will you share with him all that is to come and that is to be?

PERSONAL VOWS

_____/_____
_____, from this day on, I most chose you, to be my wife/husband. To live with you and grow with you. To stand by your side and sleep in

your arms. To be joy to your heart and food to your soul. To laugh with you and to cry with you. To comfort you when you are down and wipe away your tears with my hands. To share with you all success and honors and enjoy our times of play. To bring out the best in you and the best in me. I promise this, until we grow old, and still choosing you, our lives shall come to an end.

THE BLESSING OF THE RINGS

As God is a circle whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere, so let the seamless circle of these rings become the symbol of your endless love.

EXCHANGE OF RINGS

Beloved _____/_____, I give you this ring as a symbol of my steadfastness and joy in loving you, and as a pledge to honor you with all that I am and all I shall become for my whole life.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

O Lord, for the joy of this occasion we thank you. For the meaning and promise of this wedding day we thank you. For this important moment in an ever-growing relationship we thank you. For your presence here and at all times we thank you. In your name, O Lord, we say and pray, Amen.

(The Lord's Prayer)

WORDS OF CELEBRATION

Let us celebrate life with **RESPECT** –

by realizing we are two separate and different people, possessing different lives, ideas, backgrounds. We belong with each other, but not to each other.

Let us celebrate life with **TRUST** –

believing in our love even in darkest times. Let us search for understanding of whatever troubles us and, with trust and courage, work together to find solutions.

Let us celebrate life with **CONFIDENCE** –

by freeing each other to new and different worlds. Let the marriage be steadfast

enough to take root and yet free enough to soar.

Let us celebrate life with **GIVING** –

without thought of return, because we are not impoverished by the love we give, but made richer.

Let us celebrate life with **UNDERSTANDING** –

not only in words, but in unspoken ways. A tender touch, a smile, can often say so much more than words.

Let us celebrate life with **FORGIVENESS** –

overlooking our human flaws, not expecting perfection in each other or in

ourselves. And let us gain wisdom from the mistakes we make.

Let us celebrate life with **SHARING** –

stepping into the world together,
expanding our circle of love to include friends,
family, and others. Let our love radiate
outward, touching the lives of all we meet.

Let us celebrate life with **QUIETNESS** –

setting aside time together for peaceful
soul– searching spiritual study, prayer and
meditation, letting the annoyances of the day
slip away into the calming arms of God.

PRONOUNCEMENT

Because _____ and _____
have desired each other in marriage and have
witnessed this before God and our gathering,
affirming their acceptance of the
responsibilities of such a union, and have
pledged their love and faith to each other,
sealing their vows in the giving and receiving of
rings, I do proclaim that they are husband and
wife in the sight of God and everyone. Let all
people recognize and respect this holy union
now and forever, in the name of (God) (the
Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit). Amen.

BENEDICTION (Irish Benediction)

May the road rise up to meet you,
may the wind always be at your back,
may the sunshine on your face,
and may the rain fall gently upon your fields,
and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Amen and amen.