

The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony

¶ At the day and time appointed for solemnization of Matrimony, the persons to be married shall come into the body of the church, or shall be ready in some proper place, with their friends and neighbours; and there standing together, the Man on the right hand, and the Woman on the left, the Minister shall say,

DEARLY beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this congregation, to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony; which is an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence and first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galilee; and is commended of Saint Paul to be honourable among all men: and therefore is not by any to be entered into, nor taken in hand, unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly, to satisfy men's carnal lusts and appetites; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God; *duly considering the causes for which Matrimony was ordained.*

First, It was ordained for the procreation of children, to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy Name.

Secondly, It was ordained for a remedy against sin, and to avoid fornication; that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry, and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body.

Thirdly, It was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

Into this holy estate these two persons present come now

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to be joined. If any man can show just cause, why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace.

¶ And also, speaking unto the persons who are to be married, he shall say,

I REQUIRE and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgement when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any impediment, why ye may not be lawfully joined together in Matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured, that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's Word doth allow are not joined together by God; neither is their marriage lawful.

¶ If no impediment be alleged, then shall the Minister say to the Man,

N WILT thou have this Woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and keep her in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

¶ The Man shall answer,

I will.

¶ Then shall the Minister say unto the Woman,

N WILT thou have this Man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love him, comfort him, honour, and keep him in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?

¶ The Woman shall answer,

I will.

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¶ Here, if there be a presentation or giving in marriage, the Minister shall say,

Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?

¶ Then shall they give their troth to each other in this manner. The Minister shall cause the Man with his right hand to take the Woman by her right hand, and to say after him as follows.

I *N.* take thee *N.* to my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth.

¶ Then shall they loose their hands; and the Woman, with her right hand taking the Man by his right hand, shall likewise say after the Minister,

I *N.* take thee *N.* to my wedded 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, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth.

¶ Then shall they again loose their hands; and the Man shall give unto the Woman a Ring, laying the same upon the Book. And, before delivering the Ring to the Man, the Minister may say as follows.

BLESS, O Lord, this Ring to be a sign of the vows betwixt this Man and this Woman, and that *he* who gives it and *she* who wears it may abide in thy peace, and continue in thy favour, unto their life's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Minister deliver the Ring unto the Man, to put it upon the fourth finger of the Woman's left hand. And the Man holding the Ring there, and taught by the Minister, shall say,

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WITH this Ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

¶ And note, That if there be two Rings given, the Minister shall use the same form preceding, for the Ring given by the Woman to the Man.

¶ Then shall they both kneel down, and the Minister shall say,

Let us pray.

¶ Then shall the Minister and the people say the Lord's Prayer.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Minister add,

ETERNAL God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life: Send thy blessing upon these thy servants, this Man and this Woman, whom we bless in thy Name; that they, living faithfully together, may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant betwixt them made, (whereof *this Ring* given and received *is* a token and pledge,) and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ The Minister may add one or both of the following Prayers.

ALMIGHTY God, Creator of mankind, who only art the well-spring of life; Bestow upon these thy servants, if it be thy will, the gift and heritage of children; and grant

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that they may see their children brought up in thy faith and fear, to the honour and glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O GOD, who hast so consecrated the state of Matrimony that in it is represented the spiritual marriage and unity betwixt Christ and his Church; Look mercifully upon these thy servants, that they may love, honour, and cherish each other, and so live together in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and of peace; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit ever, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ Then shall the Minister join their right hands together, and say,

Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

¶ Then shall the Minister speak unto the people,

FORASMUCH as *N.* and *N.* have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have given and pledged their troth each to the other, and have declared the same by giving and receiving of *a Ring*, and by joining of hands; I pronounce that they are Husband and Wife, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

¶ And the Minister shall add this Blessing.

GOD the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you; and so fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. *Amen.*

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- ¶ It is convenient that the newly married persons should receive the Holy Communion at the time of their Marriage, or at the first opportunity after their Marriage.
- ¶ The Minister, at his discretion, may also use any of the following Prayers before the final Blessing.

O GOD of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless these thy servants, and sow the seed of eternal life in their hearts; that whatsoever in thy holy Word they shall profitably learn, they may in deed fulfil the same. Look, O Lord, mercifully upon them from heaven, and bless them. And as thou didst send thy blessing upon Abraham and Sarah, to their great comfort, so vouchsafe to send thy blessing upon these thy servants; that they obeying thy will, and always being in safety under thy protection, may abide in thy love unto their lives' end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O MERCIFUL Lord, and heavenly Father, by whose gracious gift mankind is increased: We beseech thee, assist with thy blessing these two persons, that they may both be fruitful in procreation of children, and also live together so long in godly love and honesty, that they may see their children christianly and virtuously brought up, to thy praise and honour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O GOD, who by thy mighty power hast made all things of nothing; who also (after other things set in order) didst appoint, that out of man (created after thine own image and similitude) woman should take her beginning; and, knitting them together, didst teach that it should never be lawful to put asunder those whom thou by Marriage hadst made one: O God, who hast consecrated the state of Matrimony to such an excellent mystery, that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity betwixt Christ and his Church; Look mercifully upon these thy servants,

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that both this man may love his wife, according to thy Word, (as Christ did love his spouse the Church, who gave himself for it, loving and cherishing it even as his own flesh,) and also that this woman may be loving, amiable, and faithful to her husband; and in all quietness, sobriety, and peace, be a follower of holy and godly matrons. O Lord, bless them both, and grant them to inherit thine everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

- ¶ The laws respecting Matrimony, whether by publishing the Banns in churches, or by License, being different in the several States, every Minister is left to the direction of those laws, in every thing that regards the civil contract between the parties.
- ¶ And when the Banns are published, it shall be in the following form:
I publish the Banns of Marriage between N. of ____, and N. of ____. If any of you know cause, or just impediment, why these two persons should not be joined together in holy Matrimony, ye are to declare it. This is the first (second or third) time of asking.