



**THE ROMAN RITUAL**

**RENEWED BY DECREE OF  
THE MOST HOLY SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE VATICAN,  
PROMULGATED BY AUTHORITY OF POPE PAUL VI  
AND REVISED AT THE DIRECTION OF POPE JOHN PAUL II**

# **THE ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY**

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**ENGLISH TRANSLATION ACCORDING  
TO THE SECOND TYPICAL EDITION**

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**For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America**

**Approved by the  
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
and Confirmed by the Apostolic See**



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# INTRODUCTION

## I. THE IMPORTANCE AND DIGNITY OF THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

1. The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish a life-long partnership between themselves,<sup>1</sup> derives its force and strength from creation, but for the Christian faithful it is also raised up to a higher dignity, since it is numbered among the Sacraments of the new covenant.
2. A Marriage is established by the conjugal covenant, that is, the irrevocable consent of both spouses, by which they freely give themselves to each other and accept each other. Moreover, this singular union of a man and a woman requires, and the good of the children demands, the complete fidelity of the spouses and the indissoluble unity of the bond.<sup>2</sup>
3. Furthermore, the institution of Marriage itself and conjugal love are, by their very nature, ordered to the procreation and formation of children and find in them, as it were, their ultimate crown.<sup>3</sup> Children are thus truly the supreme gift of Marriage and contribute greatly to the good of the parents themselves.
4. The intimate community of life and love, by which spouses “are no longer two, but one flesh,”<sup>4</sup> has been established by God the Creator, provided with its own proper laws, and endowed with that blessing which alone was not forfeited by punishment for original sin.<sup>5</sup> This sacred bond, therefore, does not depend on human choice, but rather on the Author of Marriage, who ordained it to be endowed with its own goods and ends.<sup>6</sup>
5. Indeed Christ the Lord, making a new creation and making all things new,<sup>7</sup> has willed that Marriage be restored to its primordial form and holiness in such a way that what God has joined together, no one may put asunder,<sup>8</sup> and raised this indissoluble conjugal contract to the dignity of a Sacrament so that it might signify more clearly and represent more easily the model of his own nuptial covenant with the Church.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici* (C.I.C.) can. 1055, §1.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes*, no. 48.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>Matthew 19:6.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Nuptial Blessing.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes*, no. 48.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. Matthew 19:6.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes*, no. 48.

THE FIRST READING

Genesis 1:26-28, 31a

A reading from the Book of Genesis

*Male and female he created them.*

**T**hen God said:  
“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.  
Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea,  
the birds of the air, and the cattle,  
and over all the wild animals  
and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.”

God created man in his image;  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying:  
“Be fertile and multiply;  
fill the earth and subdue it.  
Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of  
the air,  
and all the living things that move on the earth.”  
God looked at everything he had made, and he found  
it very good.

The word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5ac and 6a

*R.* (see 1a) Blessed are those who fear the Lord.

**or:**

*R.* (4) See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

**Blessed are all who fear the LORD,  
and walk in his ways!  
By the labor of your hands you shall eat.  
You will be blessed and prosper.**

*R.* Blessed are those who fear the Lord.

**or:**

*R.* See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

**Your wife like a fruitful vine  
in the heart of your house;  
your children like shoots of the olive  
around your table.**

*R.* Blessed are those who fear the Lord.

**or:**

*R.* See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

**Indeed thus shall be blessed  
the man who fears the LORD.  
May the LORD bless you from Zion  
all the days of your life!  
May you see your children's children.**

*R.* Blessed are those who fear the Lord.

**or:**

*R.* See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.



## CHAPTER IV

# VARIOUS TEXTS TO BE USED IN THE RITE OF MARRIAGE AND IN THE MASS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

## I. BIBLICAL READINGS

The passages that follow may be used in the Mass “For the Celebration of Marriage” and in the celebration of Marriages without Mass. At least one reading that explicitly speaks of Marriage must always be chosen. These readings are designated by an asterisk.

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\*163.

**11**

1 Peter 3:1-9

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Peter

*Be of one mind, sympathetic, loving toward one another.*

**B**eloved:  
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.**

164.

**12**

1 John 3:18-24

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint John**

*Love in deed and in truth.*

**C**hildren, let us love not in word or speech  
but in deed and truth.

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

**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.**