

# THE MARRIAGE LITURGY

Congratulations on your engagement! As we gather to prepare your Marriage Liturgy, the Director of Liturgy and Music and the Parish Wedding Coordinator will help lead you through the preparation process. Take advantage of them in asking questions. They have had experience in preparing marriage liturgies. Preparing the marriage liturgy is not difficult; it simply takes time and attention. Carefully preparing and celebrating the central features of the Marriage Liturgy can help make the liturgy the **CENTERPIECE** of your wedding day.

**As we prepare your marriage liturgy, we look to Sunday Mass as our model. The goal of your preparation is to encourage the FULL and ACTIVE PARTICIPATION of all who will gather to celebrate your Marriage Liturgy. Your wedding is a participatory celebration, rather than an event with spectators.**

**The Director of Liturgy and Music will send you home with many different options for your marriage liturgy to think about. Set aside some time to prepare the liturgy TOGETHER. Discuss the various options with each other, pray over the scripture readings, general intercessions, song texts, mass texts and the marriage rite texts, be sensitive to one another's tastes, and be open to new ways of doing things. Preparing the marriage liturgy together can bring you closer together and prepare you for married life, and the result will be a celebration that is the centerpiece of your whole day.**

## GATHERING OF THE ASSEMBLY

You have invited many people to come witness and celebrate your Marriage Liturgy. We want to do everything possible to make sure that as people arrive to the Church, that they are made to feel welcome and to gather them into an Assembly that is ready to celebrate the Marriage Liturgy together. The tone of the wedding can be set in these gathering moments. One way to facilitate welcoming is to have people at the doors of the Church greeting everyone as they come. This could be done by the two of you and your parents, the groom and both sets of parents, just your parents, or even your bridesmaids and groomsmen. By welcoming them, you are thanking them for joining you on your special day and to encourage participation of them in the liturgy. It also allows for people to be introduced to each other so that they feel comfortable in celebrating the liturgy together. Music will be played beginning 15 minutes before the start of the Marriage Liturgy. This will also help in the gathering of the Assembly and to create a spirit of prayer. The Director of Liturgy and Music will play appropriate music for you to choose from.

## **PROCESSIONAL**

The Processional is an extended form of the entrance procession for the presider and altar servers at Sunday Mass. There are many options for the order of the procession. Please consult the Wedding Procession sheet in your packet to select options. Music for the Procession may be found in the music selection book.

## **GATHERING SONG**

After the procession, the Gathering Song is sung by the Assembly. This is an effective way for everyone to become participants as we join our voices in prayer at the beginning of the wedding liturgy. The Gathering Song also is a great way for people of our faith traditions to unite together in a song that is known by everyone. Music for the Gathering Song may be found in the music selection book.

## **GLORIA**

## **COLLECT**

Choose from texts in the prayer selection book.

# **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING**

Choose from Old Testament texts in your marriage packet. Choose a lector that will effectively proclaim this reading and give them the text way in advance so that they can practice. You will want to choose someone who is already a lector at a parish or someone who has good public speaking skills.

## **RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

Choose a Responsorial Psalm from your marriage packet that is most fitting for your celebration that compliments your reading from the Old Testament. The cantor proclaims the Responsorial Psalm through song. The Director of Liturgy and Music will play different musical options for the Psalm you choose.

## **NEW TESTAMENT READING**

Choose from New Testament texts in your marriage packet. Choose a lector that will effectively proclaim this reading and give them the text way in advance so that they can practice. You will want to choose someone who is already a lector at a parish or someone who has good public speaking skills.

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – “Alleluia”**

The Gospel Acclamation is the “Alleluia” sung at the time of the Gospel. The Director of Liturgy and Music will play appropriate options for you. A Gospel verse needs to be chosen from your marriage packet.

## **GOSPEL**

Choose from Gospel texts in your marriage packet. The presider of your marriage liturgy will read the Gospel.

## **HOMILY**

As at Sunday Mass, the Presider will preach a homily. It addresses the sacramental nature of Christian Marriage as exemplified in the scripture readings just proclaimed.

## **SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE**

The two of you are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage in the Roman Catholic Marriage Liturgy. You give yourselves to one another in marriage freely and unconditionally in the presence of the church's witnesses: the priest, the best man and maid of honor, and the entire assembly.

## **EXCHANGE OF CONSENT**

Choose from the Consent texts in the prayer selection book. These texts are the marriage vows that you exchange. At the conclusion of the exchange of consent, the presider will say: "What God has joined, men must not divide" and the Assembly gathered will respond in song with an "Amen" to show their support and affirmation of your commitment.

## **BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS**

Choose from Blessing and Exchange of Rings texts in the prayer selection book. After you have exchanged your rings with each other, the Assembly will respond with a Song of Thanksgiving which is the Gospel Alleluia sung earlier. This acclamation praises God for the commitment that you have made to each other.

## **GENERAL INTERCESSIONS**

As on Sunday, we take time to pray for the needs of the church, world, community, and for yourselves who have just made a commitment to each other in marriage. Sample General Intercessions are included in your marriage packet. In addition, you may pray for family members and friends who are sick, who have died, who are traveling, who are celebrating marriage anniversaries, or any other special needs. Once again, choose someone who will be comfortable in reading these intercessions.

# LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

## PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR AND GIFTS

During the Preparation of the Altar and Gifts, family or friends may dress the altar with the corporal. Choose family or friends who will bring forward the gifts of bread and wine. During this time a song may be sung by the Assembly or an instrumental may be played. Music for the Preparation of the Altar and Gifts may be found in the music selection book.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Choose a Prayer over the Gifts text from the prayer selection book.

## EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The **PREFACE** begins the Eucharistic Prayer. You can choose a Preface text from the prayer selection book. The Eucharistic Prayer is the central prayer of the Mass. As on Sunday, the prayer is led by the priest and the assembly sings acclamations at three different points in the prayer (**Holy Holy, Holy; Mystery of Faith; Great Amen**). The Director of Liturgy and Music will help you choose appropriate acclamations that everyone will know.

## COMMUNION RITE

We begin the Communion Rite with the praying of the **Lord's Prayer**. After the Lord's Prayer, the presider invites the couple in front of the altar for a special **NUPTIAL BLESSING**. Choose a Nuptial Blessing Text from the prayer selection book. After the Nuptial Blessing, the presider will invite everyone to offer a **Sign of Peace**. The **Lamb of God** is then sung during the Breaking of the Bread. The Director of Liturgy and Music will help you choose an appropriate Lamb of God that everyone will know.

## COMMUNION PROCESSION

As the presider receives communion, the communion song sung by the Assembly begins. *"Its purpose is to express the communicants' union in spirit by means of the unity of their voices, to show joy of heart, and to highlight more clearly the "communitarian" nature of the procession to receive Communion"* (General Instruction of the Roman Missal 86). Those who are not practicing the Catholic faith may come in procession as well for a blessing. Since people will be processing to communion, a refrain that they can sing without hymnals is suggested. Music for the Communion Procession may be found in the music selection book.

## SONG OF THANKSGIVING

As on Sunday, a Song of Thanksgiving may be sung following the period of silence after communion. This song is **OPTIONAL**. The Director of Liturgy and Music will guide you in selecting songs that are appropriate for this time. Music for the Song of Thanksgiving may be found in the music selection book.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

After Communion, silence is observed. The Prayer after Communion is then prayed. Choose a text from Prayer after Communion texts in prayer selection book.

### **DEDICATION TO MARY, MOTHER OF GOD (OPTIONAL)**

At this time, a couple may choose to take flowers as a dedication to Mary, Mother of God. Music for the Dedication to Mary, Mother of God may be found in the music selection book.

### **FINAL BLESSING AND DISMISSAL**

The Marriage Liturgy ends with the Final Blessing and Dismissal. Choose from the Final Blessing Texts in the prayer selection book.

### **RECESSIONAL MUSIC**

Recessional Music is played while the newly married couples walks down the aisle as husband and wife. Music for the Recessional may be found in the music selection book.