

Catholic Wedding Reading Options

The readings at a Catholic wedding liturgy are a proclamation of God's Word and of the Church's faith about marriage. For this reason, they are limited to readings from the scriptures (the Bible).

You may find it helpful to reflect prayerfully on each reading and to choose those that speak to your hopes and dreams for your Christian marriage.

For commentary on the readings to assist your choice, you can go to foryourmarriage.org/catholic-marriage/planning-a-catholic-wedding/readings/

Old Testament Readings

Below are some options you can use for your first reading. If you have an Old Testament reading you like which is not listed here, please feel free to discuss that with your priest or deacon.

Genesis 1:26-28, 31a

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 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.

Genesis 2:18-24

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 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.

Tobit 8:4b-8

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 the 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."

Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31.

When one finds a worthy wife, her value is far beyond pearls. Her husband, entrusting his heart to her, has an unending 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.

Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a

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 dove, 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 says 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."

Book of Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a

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.

Book of Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12

Two are better than one: they get a good wage for their labor. If one falls, the other will lift up his companion. Woe to the solitary man! For if he should fall, he has no one to lift him up. So also, if two sleep together, they keep each other warm. How can one alone keep warm? Where a lone man may be overcome, two together can resist. A three-ply cord is not easily broken.

Responsorial Psalms

(sung by cantor)

Psalm 33: The Earth Is Full of the Goodness of God

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

Your words, O God, are truth indeed, and all your works are ever faithful;
You love justice and right, your compassion fills all creation.
See how the eye of God is watching, ever guarding all who wait in hope,
To deliver them from death and sustain them in time of famine.
Exult, you just, in the Lord, for praise is the song of the righteous!
How happy the people of God, the ones whom God has chosen!
Our soul is waiting for God, for God is our help and our shield.
May your kindness, O God, be upon us who place our hope in you.

Psalm 34: Taste and See

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

I will bless the Lord at all times, God's praise ever in my mouth.
Glory in the Lord for ever, and the lowly will hear and be glad.
Glory in the Lord with me, let us together extol God's name.
I sought the Lord, who answered me and delivered me from all my fears.
Look to God that you might be radiant with joy,
and your faces free from all shame.
The Lord hears the suffering souls, and saves them from all distress.

Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and Merciful

The Lord is kind and merciful.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all my being bless God's name;
bless the Lord, and forget not God's benefits.
God pardons all your iniquities, and comforts your sorrows,
redeems your life from destruction and crowns you with kindness.
Merciful, merciful, and gracious is our God;
slow to anger, abounding in kindness.

Psalm 118

This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad.

Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God's mercy endures for ever;
Let the house of Israel say: "God's mercy endures for ever."
The hand of the Lord has struck with power, God's right hand is exalted,
I shall not die, but live anew, declaring the works of the Lord.
The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,
the Lord of love and mercy has brought wonder to our eyes!

Psalm 128: Blest Are Those Who Love You

Blest are those who love you, happy those who follow you, blest are those who seek you O' God.
Happy all those who fear the Lord, and walk in God's pathway;
You will find what you long for; the riches of our God.
Your spouse shall be like a fruitful vine in the midst of your home,
Your children flourish like olive plants rejoicing at your table.
May the blessings of God be yours all the days of your life,
May the peace and the love of God live always in your heart.

Psalm 145

Our God is compassion to all creation.
The Lord is grace and mercy, slow to anger, full of love.
God is good to all creation; full of compassion.
Let all your works give thanks, O God. Let the faithful bless you.
The eyes of all are filled with hope; you give them all they need.
The Lord is just in ev'ry way, full of love for all.
God is near to those in need, who call out from their hearts.

New Testament Readings

Below are some options you can use for your second reading. If you have a New Testament reading you like which is not listed here, please feel free to discuss that with your priest or deacon.

Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39

Brothers and sisters: If God is for us, who can be against us? He 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.

Romans 12:1-2, 9-18

I urge you, 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 honor. 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.]

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

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.

Corinthians 12:31-13:8a

Brothers and sisters: 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, is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interest, 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.

Ephesians 5:2a, 21, 25, 28-32

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. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church and handed himself over for her. 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.

Philippians 4:4-9

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.

Colossians 3:12-17

Brothers and sisters: Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgive 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.

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

Brothers and sisters: 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.

John 3:18-24

Children, 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 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 commandment 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.

John 4:7-12

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-begotten 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.

Revelation 19:1, 5-9a

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."

Gospel Readings

Matthew 5:1-12a

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."

Matthew 5:13-16

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."

Matthew 7:21, 24-29

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.

Matthew 19:3-6

Some 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.”

Matthew 22:35-40

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 neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.”

Mark 10:6-9

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.”

John 2:1-11

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 servants 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.

John 15:9-12

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 might be in you and your joy might be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.”

John 15:12-16

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.”

John 17:20-26

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: “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.”

Examples of Universal Prayers

[Option 1]

1. For this bride and groom, and for their well-being as a family, let us pray to the Lord.
2. For the Church, the holy People of God, and for unity among all Christians, let us pray to the Lord.
3. For the relatives and friends of N. & N., and for all who have assisted this couple, let us pray to the Lord.
4. For young people preparing to enter Marriage, and for all whom the Lord is calling to another state in life, let us pray to the Lord.
5. For all families throughout the world and for lasting peace among all people, let us pray to the Lord.
6. For all members of our families who have passed from this world, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

[Option 2]

1. For Church leaders, that they may lead us to deeper faith in God and a stronger love for others, let us pray to the Lord.
2. For our president and all leaders of government that they may be effective in achieving peace and eliminating poverty, let us pray to the Lord.
3. For married persons that they may continue to give, be able to forgive, and find happiness deepen with the passing of each day, let us pray to the Lord.
4. For N. and N., now beginning their life together, that they may have divine assistance at every moment, the constant support of friends, the rich blessing of children, a warm love reaching out to others, and good health until a ripe old age, let us pray to the Lord.
5. For those who are sick, lonely, discouraged, or oppressed that they may be strengthened by God’s help and aided by their friends, let us pray to the Lord.
6. For those who have died from the families of N. and N., especially _____, that they may enjoy perfect happiness and total fulfillment in eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

[Option 3]

1. That all Christians may reflect Jesus’s love, and thus inspire their neighbors to a more generous life, let us pray to the Lord.
2. That world and national leaders may promote what is necessary for strong and stable family life in today’s society, let us pray to the Lord.
3. That the marriage of N. and N. be a blessing for their families, their friends, their neighbors, and their faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
4. That this day of marriage may be filled with wonder and, in time, be a source of inspiring and happy memories, let us pray to the Lord.
5. That God may assist all married couples and give them joy, let us pray to the Lord.
6. That all of us gathered here be filled with a spirit of love and respect, kindness and generosity, patience and forgiveness, let us pray to the Lord.

[Option 4]

1. For Christians of all traditions, that all who follow Christ may live in the unity for which Christ prayed, let us pray to the Lord.
2. For the parishes of which **N.** and **N.** have been a part: (here name the churches where you were baptized, where you celebrated First Communion and Confirmation, and other parishes of which you have been a part), let us pray to the Lord.
3. For our nation and this city, and for those who serve in our government, let us pray to the Lord.
4. For the parents and families of **N.** and **N.**, for their godparents (here you may name your godparents), and for all who formed them in faith, let us pray to the Lord.
5. For the deceased relatives of **N.** and **N.** (here you may name deceased relatives), and for all who are sick or suffering, let us pray to the Lord.
6. For safe journeys home for all who have traveled to be here, let us pray to the Lord.