

# The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage and Holy Eucharist

**Procession:** "Jesu, Joy"

*The people may stand as they see the Cross being carried up the aisle..*

## The Water is Poured

### Introduction

*The people may be seated.*

*The presider, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ face the people.*

*The presider greets the people and says to the congregation:*

We have gathered to celebrate the marriage of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ . Fifteen years ago on June 25, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, in a union service, made their vows to one another to be partners for life and have considered themselves married. Now they come before all of us to be legally married. Marriage is the promise of hope between partners who love each other, who trust that love, and who wish to share their future together.

It enables two separate people to share their desire, longings, dreams, and memories and to help each other through their uncertainties. It provides the encouragement to risk more and thus to gain more. In marriage they belong together, providing mutual support.

Here in the presence of God we recognize and affirm their relationship as they live with us in community.

*The presider says to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ :*

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, we welcome you. We are glad to join with you in the celebration of your marriage, to witness your vows, to pray with you, and to wish you joy in your continuing life together.

*The presider, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are seated.*

endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

*Reader:* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
*People:* Thanks be to God.

### **Holy Gospel**

John 15:9-12

*The people may stand.*

*Deacon:* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.  
*People:* Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

*Deacon:* The Gospel of the Lord.  
*People:* Praise to you, Lord Christ.

### **Homily**

*The people may sit.*

### **Rite of Marriage**

*and approach the altar and face the people. The presider faces and*

### **Statement of Intentions**

*Presider:*

My friends, you have come together in this church so that our God may seal and

strengthen your love in the presence of the congregation and so that you may be legally married. Christ has abundantly blessed this love. He has already consecrated you in baptism and loved you through your first fifteen years as partners. He enriches and strengthens you as you assume legal bonds of matrimony in mutual and lasting fidelity.

and \_\_\_\_\_, have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage?

and \_\_\_\_\_: Yes.

*Presider:* Will you love, comfort, and honor each other for the rest of your lives?

and \_\_\_\_\_: Yes.

*The presider turns to face the people.*

*Presider:* Members of this community of faith, friends and relatives: I ask you, will you from this day forward affirm, nurture, sustain, and honor this covenant? Will you pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in their life together? Will you care for them in times of need, rejoice with them in times of happiness, weep with them in times of sorrow, and strive with them to bear witness to the love of God through Christ, for the world?

*People:* We will.

### **Act of Covenant**

*The presider faces Gina and Martha.*

*Presider:* \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, since it is your intention to enter into this legal marriage, join your right hands, and declare your vows before God and God's church.

*Martha:*

I believe that a Higher Power brought us together and intends for us to be together always. I will do everything in my power to make it so.

I will always remember that honesty and trust are the foundation on which this relationship was built, and that it is this foundation that gives our relationship the strength to grow. As our partnership grows, I will continue to give you the freedom and space for individual growth.

I will allow you to be as strong-willed and ambitious as I know you can be, but I will also hold you up and give you support when you can't be as confident and secure as you would like.

I will rejoice in our differences and not be frightened by them, for I know we have both become masters at the art of compromise.

Playfulness, romance, and intimacy will be a part of each day that we're together, for it's these things that help keep our love alive.

I am truly blessed with the gift of you, and I will thank God for this blessing today, tomorrow, and forever. I love you, , always and in all ways. And I promise you these things as your partner for life.

It is with great joy and ever growing love that I give myself to be your partner in life.

I believe that we have been brought to this day by divine intention and direction. I thank God for the blessing of you and our love.

Together we will share our lives, multiplying the joys and dividing the sorrows.

Our dependence on each other does not preclude our independence, though. I will allow you the opportunity to grow as an individual and the freedom to pursue your own interests.

I will allow myself to be vulnerable to you—to think my thoughts aloud, so that you may help me to realize my feelings.

I will encourage our growth as a partnership and strive to keep our love shining as a bright star in a troubled world.

, I will love you always and forever. I love you always and in all ways. I pledge these vows to you as your partner for life.

and extend their left hands toward the presider, who says:

*Presider:* Fifteen years ago these rings were exchanged and blessed. Today we again ask God's blessing on the rings that they may be signs of the vows and have renewed.

*The presider joins and 's right hands and wraps her stole around them.*

*Presider:* May the God of Ruth and Naomi, may Jesus of Nazareth, born of our sister Mary, may the Holy Spirit, who broods over her creation as a mother broods over her children, bless, unite, and keep you.

and , you have declared your vows before God and the Church. And so in the presence of God and this company, by the power vested in me by the State of Iowa, I declare that you are married. What God has joined, no one must divide.

*People:* Amen.

### **Prayers of the People**

*The people may stand.*

*Presider:* We have heard God's word in scriptures and experienced the Spirit's presence in this exchange of vows. Now let us ask God to listen to and bless our words of prayer which will be offered by family and friends:

Gracious God, creator and preserver of all life, source of all goodness and giver of all grace, look with favor upon the world which you have made, and especially upon these your two daughters who come before you today.

Give them wisdom and devotion in the ordering of their common life, that each may be to the other a strength in need, a counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy.

Grant that their wills may be so knit together in your will, and their spirits in your Spirit, that they may grow in love and peace with you and one another all the days of their life.

Give them grace, when they hurt each other, to recognize and acknowledge their fault, and to seek each other's forgiveness and yours.

Make their life together a sign of your love to this broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair.  
Give them such fulfillment of their mutual affection that they may reach out in love and concern for others.

Grant that all persons who have witnessed these vows may find their lives strengthened and their own commitments confirmed.

Grant that the bonds of our common humanity, by which all your children are united one to another, may be so transformed by your grace that you may reign in justice and compassion upon the earth.

*Presider:* God of creation, You have chosen us and given us your love and the power of the Holy Spirit in our midst. Hear our prayers today and keep us open. May our faith issue forth in action, our love show itself in deeds, and our hope give us courage. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **The Peace**

*Presider:* The peace of Christ be always with you.

*People:* And also with you.

## **Holy Eucharist**

### **Offertory**

*The oblationers will bring the gifts of bread and wine to the altar. As they come forward, the people may stand.*

*The people remain standing while ushers present to the deacon or presider the offerings which are placed on the altar.*

*Presider* The Lord be with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Presider* Lift up your hearts.

*People* We lift them to the Lord.