

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin
Mold



*An Annotated Order
of the Marriage Service*

The Service of Holy Matrimony

These notes are intended to help you understand the various parts of the Wedding Service and their significance. This order of service uses the rite of the Church in Wales. Notes have been added by the Reverend Ian Day, Vicar of Mold and Area Dean of Mold

THE INTRODUCTION

The persons to be married stand before the Minister the man on the right of the woman.

The Priest says to the congregation:

We have come together in the presence of God to witness the marriage of this man and this woman, and to pray for them. Marriage is a gift of God to mankind. Holy Scripture compares it to the union of Christ with his Church. It should therefore be held in honour by all mankind. It must not be entered upon lightly or thoughtlessly, but responsibly and reverently. God calls men and women to the married state so that their love may be made holy in life-long union; that they may bring up their children to grow in grace and learn to love him; and that they may honour, help and comfort one another both in prosperity and adversity.

If any of you is aware of any just impediment to this marriage, you are to declare it now.

The Priest, addressing the persons to be married, continues:

I require and charge you both, in the presence of God, that, if either of you knows any reason why, according to the law of the Church or of this land, you may not be joined together in marriage, you now make it known.

If any person alleges an impediment which is recognized by God's law or the laws of this land, he must give an indemnity against any pecuniary loss, in the event of his allegation failing, which his action brings upon the parties. If such an allegation is made and an indemnity given, the marriage must be deferred until the truth has been established. If no impediment is alleged,

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

The Lord be with you;
And with your spirit.

The Priest says the following Collect:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open and all desires known: purify our thoughts through your Holy Spirit, that we may love you with heart and mind and praise you as we ought: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The "Introduction" gives the 3 main purposes of marriage:

- Growth of love in life-long stable relationship;
- Creation of and care for children in a Christian family;
- Support and care for each other.

Marriage is a serious legal undertaking and so both the couple and the congregation are asked if there are any reasons why they cannot be married

Marriage is a God-given gift to all people, irrespective of race or religion. The prayers and readings clearly set the Christian context for the marriage service.

The Epistle

For the Epistle one of the following two readings is chosen.

Either

The reader says:

The reading from St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians chapter 13.

I may speak in tongues of men or of angels, but if I am without love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. I may have the gift of prophecy, and know every hidden truth; I may have faith strong enough to move mountains; but if I have no love, I am nothing. I may dole out all I possess, or even give my body to be burnt, but if I have no love, I am none the better.

Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance.

1 Corinthians 13:1-7

Or

The reader says:

The reading from St Paul's letter to the Colossians chapter 3 beginning at verse 12.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:12-17

The Psalm

One of the following 3 Psalms will be said (or sung if there is a choir at the wedding service)

Psalm 37:3-5

Put thou thy trust in the Lord and be / doing / good: dwell in the land, and / veri • ly / thou • shalt be / fed.

‡Delight thou / in the / Lord: and he shall / give thee • thy / heart's de-/sire.

Commit thy way unto the Lord and put thy / trust in / him: and / he shall / bring it • to / pass.

Or

"Epistle" means "letter" and the readings are taken from two letters the Apostle Paul wrote to two churches in the first century AD.

Look at each and decide which one you would want to be read at your wedding.

You may ask a relative or friend to read the lesson.

The Psalms are from the Old Testament. Please choose one of the three and have it printed in your Order of Service. If a choir is present we will sing the psalm, otherwise it will be read aloud by all present at the wedding.

Psalm 67

‡God be merciful unto / us and / bless us: and shew us the / light / of his / countenance,

That thy way may be / known up • on / earth: thy saving / health a- /mong all / nations.

Let the peoples / praise • thee O / God: yea let / all the / peoples / praise thee.

O let the nations re-/joice • and be / glad: for thou judgest the peoples righteously, * and / guidest • the / nations • on / earth.

Let the peoples / praise • thee O / God: yea let / all the / peoples / praise thee.

The earth hath brought / forth her / increase: and God, even our own / God, shall / give us his / blessing.

The blessing of / God • be up-/on us: and let all the / ends • of the / world / fear him.

Or

Psalm 121

I will lift up mine eyes / unto • the / hills: from / whence / cometh • my / help?

My help cometh / from the / Lord; who hath / made / heaven and / earth.

He will not suffer thy / foot • to be / moved: and he that / keepeth • thee / will not / sleep.

Behold he that / keepeth / Israel: shall / neither / slumber • nor / sleep.

The Lord him-/self • is thy / keeper: the Lord upon thy right / hand shall / give thee / shade;

The sun shall not / strike • thee by / day: neither / shall the / moon by / night.

‡ The Lord shall preserve thee from / all / evil: yea it is / he • that shall / keep thee / safe.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy / coming / in: from this time / forth for / ever-/ more.

The Gospel

Either

The reader says: Hear the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew

The people reply: Glory be to thee, O Lord.

Jesus said, "Have you never read that the Creator made them from the beginning male and female?"; and he added, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be made one with his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. It follows that they are no longer two individuals: they are one flesh. What God has joined together, man must not separate."

Matthew 19:4-6

Or

The reader says: Hear the Holy Gospel according to Saint John

The people reply: Glory be to thee, O Lord.

"Gospel" means "Good News" - the good news of "Jesus Christ".

Our two readings are taken from Matthew's and John's Gospel.

Please choose one of them.

Tell the Vicar of your choice of readings at the wedding rehearsal.

Jesus said, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Dwell in my love. If you heed my commands, you will dwell in my love, as I have heeded my Father's commands and dwell in his love. I have spoken thus to you, so that my joy may be in you, and your joy complete. This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you."

John 15. 9-12

The people say: Praise be to thee, O Christ.

THE MARRIAGE

The persons to be married standing before him, the Priest says to the man:

N., will you have N. to be your wife? Will you live with her in obedience to God's will and purpose? Will you love her, honour her and care for her, in sickness and in health? Will you be faithful to her, and her alone, as long as you both live?

The man answers: I will.

Then the Priest says to the woman:

N., will you have N. to be your husband? Will you live with him in obedience to God's will and purpose? Will you love him, honour him and care for him, in sickness and in health? Will you be faithful to him, and him alone, as long as you both live?

The woman answers: I will.

The Priest directs the man to take the woman's right hand in his right hand, and to say after him:

I, N., take you N., to be my 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,
As long as we both shall live,
According to the will and purpose of God.
And to this I give you my pledge.

Then they loose hands, and the woman takes the man's right hand in her right hand, and says after the Priest:

I, N., take you N., to be my 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,
As long as we both shall live,
According to the will and purpose of God.
And to this I give you my pledge.

The "scene" has been set. The context of what follows is a Christian service.

Marriage is a commitment of two people to each other. The commitment is made freely and equally. These questions by the priest give the bride and groom the opportunity to freely and publicly make their commitment to each other.

By the joining of hands, the exchange of promises, and the giving and receiving of a ring (or rings), the couple marry each other. The bride and groom are the ministers of the sacrament of marriage.

There is no "giving away" of the woman. The service emphasises the equal partnership in marriage. All the vows and promises made by each are the same.

Then they again loose hands, and the Ring (or Rings, if the man and the woman wish to exchange Rings) being placed on the Priest's book, the Priest may say:

Bless, O Lord, this Ring (these Rings), given and received as a sign of love and faithfulness. Amen.

The man, taking the Ring, puts it on the fourth finger of the woman's left hand, and, holding it there, says after the Priest:

Receive this Ring in token of my love and faithfulness.
I honour you with my body,
And all my possessions I share with you.

The woman, having received the Ring, says after the Priest:

I receive this Ring as a sign of the love and faithfulness between us.

If the couple wish to exchange Rings, the woman, taking the other Ring, puts it on the fourth finger of the man's left hand, and, holding it there, says after the Priest:

Receive this Ring in token of my love and faithfulness.
I honour you with my body,
And all my possessions I share with you.

The man having received the Ring, says after the Priest:

I receive this Ring as a sign of the love and faithfulness between us.

The man and the woman kneel, and the Priest says to the people:

As *N.* and *N.* have consented together in marriage, and have made their pledge to one another before God and this congregation, and have declared it by joining of hands, and by giving and receiving of a Ring (Rings), I declare that they are now husband and wife.
In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Those whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder.

Then the Priest blesses the couple:

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, 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 you may so live together in this life, that in the world to come you may have life everlasting. Amen.

THE INTERCESSION

If the Marriage has taken place at the chancel step, the Priest may now lead the newly-married couple towards the altar.

Kneel or sit

Almighty and everlasting God, strengthen these your servants *N.* and *N.* with your grace, that they may keep the promises they have made in your presence:

Lord, in your mercy;
Hear our prayer.

The priest declares to the congregation that the former groom and bride are now husband and wife. A new chapter has begun in their relationship and in their lives.

For their continuing growth and development God's help is given through the Blessing. God is always ready to help - but we have to be ready to respond to him.

The congregation join in praying for the newly-married couple and for their future life together.

Let your peace be in their home, and your blessing upon it:

Lord, in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Bless their marriage with the gift of children. Help them to be responsible parents, and give them wisdom, love and patience to bring up their children in the Christian faith:

Lord, in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Enable them to bear one another's burdens and share one another's joys, that they may fulfil the law of Christ:

Lord, in your mercy;

Hear our prayer.

Make your love known through them and their home, that your holy Name may be glorified:

Lord, in your mercy;

Hear our 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, the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Priest says:

To God the Father, who first loved us,
and made us accepted in the Beloved;

To God the Son, who loved us,
and washed us from our sins in his own Blood;

To God the Holy Spirit,
who sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts,
Be all love and all glory, for time and for eternity **Amen.**

The service ends here and the newly-married couple sign the marriage registers before leaving the church.

Sometimes these prayers may be altered to respond to particular needs and situations. These will be discussed at the Wedding Interview or at the Wedding Rehearsal.

The couple together with the Priest, the best man, bridesmaids, page boys, and parents will go to the place in Church where the registers are to be signed. Along with the signatures of the newly-married couple will be those of the two witnesses - usually the chief bridesmaid and best man.

If the service takes place in the context of the Holy Eucharist the Lord's Prayer and the Prayer of Benediction are omitted and the newly-married couple move to the place where they are to receive Holy Communion.

The service of the Holy Eucharist begins at the Offertory.

The Priest says:

The peace of the Lord be always with you;

And with your spirit.

Then the Priest begins the Offertory, saying:

I will bless the Lord at all times:
his praise shall always be on my lips.
Taste and see that the Lord is good:
happy are those who put their trust in him.

Before the Breaking of the Bread, this prayer is said by the Priest:

Father, you have consecrated the union of man and wife to be a holy mystery in which is reflected the marriage of Christ and his Church. Look with favour on these your servants, and grant that they may be faithful to one another and ever abide in your love; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

This order of service for the solemnisation of Matrimony is the rite of the Church in Wales. For the benefit of parishioners who will be using the service in the Parish of Mold additional rubrics and instructions have been added for clarification

If the couple have usually attended the Holy Eucharist on Sundays as part of their Christian lifestyle they may choose to have their marriage within the context of a celebration of the Holy Eucharist. This will have been discussed beforehand at the Wedding Interview.

If you have any questions please contact me, the Reverend Ian Day on 01352-752960, or by email at friday@virginmary.org.uk