

Wedding Resources

- **Rituals**
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Rituals

Following are suggestions on how to highlight some of the rituals and symbols of the Sacrament of Marriage, within Mass and outside Mass. It is not intended that all of these suggestions be used in the one liturgy. It is important not to overload the liturgy or interrupt its liturgical flow. It is recommended that these suggestions be selected and adapted according to the cultural, spiritual and liturgical circumstances and readiness of the couple and their family and friends.

- **Gathering And Greeting Of The Community:**

By way of creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for the wedding liturgy, have several people, representative of both bridal parties, greet the family and friends of the couple as they arrive at the Church, and escort them into the church. Just before the Bridal Procession begins, have the Presider greet and welcome the community and invite them to take a minute to greet one another and introduce themselves to those around them.

- **Parental Entrustment Of The Bride And The Groom:**

Following the bridal procession, have the parents of the bride and groom, present their children to each other. This inclusive gesture can be a simple but powerful symbol of the parents' acceptance of their children's union and the entrustment of their children into the love and care of the respective partners. Have the groom stand between his parents facing the community. When the bride and her father arrive at the altar, have the mother of the bride step to the other side of the bride. The three move forward and stand beside the groom and his parents. The bride's parents take each other's hand and the bride then places her hand on her parents' hands. The parents then surrender their daughter's hand into the groom's hand. The groom's parents place their hand on the shoulder of the groom as he receives the hand of his bride. The parents then return to their place and the bridal party take up their positions for the continuation of the liturgy.

- **Family Candle Ritual:**

By way of symbolising the formative role of the families in the life of the couple, and the parents' acceptance of their union, after the bride has been presented to the groom, the parents of both parties come forward, each with a candle bearing their respective family names, and light their candles from the Easter

Candle. They then place the candles on either side of the *unlit wedding candle* in the centre of the altar.

- **Placement of the Bride and Groom:**

Since the bride and groom are in fact the “celebrants” of the sacrament, together with the Presider, it is appropriate that they be positioned on the sanctuary facing the community.

- **Exchange of Vows:**

Ensure that the couple do not have their back to the community during the exchange of vows. Ideally they should stand facing each other in such a manner that the community can see them. Also ensure that the exchange of vows can be heard and that the microphone is used in a discreet but effective manner.

- **Blessing and Exchange of Rings and Scrolls:**

Take time and care in the blessing of the rings. As they are being blessed, hold the rings high before the couple and the community so that they can be seen. When the couple exchange rings they may also present each other with a “scroll”, prepared by the couple, as part of their marriage preparation, containing the expectations of their respective roles as husband and wife, and their hopes and dreams for their future. The scrolls are placed on the altar on either side of their *unlit* wedding candle. (*Please see below*).

- **Lighting of the Wedding Candle:**

As a symbol of their union in Christ, following the exchange of rings, the bride and groom light together their wedding candle from the Easter Candle. They then stand facing the community, and holding their candle together, they display it to the community. Having done so they turn and place their candle in the centre of the altar. Following this, they take up their respective family candles, turn to the community and extinguish the candles. They then present them to their parents as a memento of the ritual of their union. This candle ritual can be accompanied with appropriate instrumental music or a mantra, or refrain from a suitable hymn. Ensure that the music ends with the candle ritual so as not to interrupt the flow of the liturgy.

- **Presentation of Gifts and Eucharistic Prayer:**

The married couple receive the gifts of bread and wine with the Presider and stand together beside the Presider during the prayer of offering and throughout the Eucharistic Prayer.

- **Communion:**

Immediately after the Priest’s Communion, the newly wed couple receive Communion under both kinds.

- **Final Blessing:**

Following the Concluding Prayer, just before the signing of the register, have the parents of the couple come forward and stand on either side of the couple and pray the final blessing with the Presider, by extending their hands over the couple.

- **Recessional Procession:**

The Bride and Groom lead the procession out of the Church followed by their

families and then the whole community.

Readings:

For a comprehensive list of recommended scripture readings, please see **Additional Resources** below.

First Reading:

Genesis 1:26-28, 31a *Male and female he created them.*

Genesis 2:18-24 *And they will be two in one flesh*

Genesis 24: 48-51, 58-67 *Isaac loved Rebekah, and so he was consoled for the loss of his mother.*

Song of Songs 2: 8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a *For love is as strong as death*

Ecclesiasticus 17: 1- 3; 5-7 *He gave them a heart to think with...*

(Beware of the need for inclusive language in this text)

Micah 6: 8 *Act justly, love tenderly, walk humbly with your God...*

Responsorial Psalms:

Psalm 32:12 and 18, 20-21, 22

Response: *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. (5b)*

Psalm 102:1-2, 8 and 13, 17-18a

Response: *The Lord's kindness is everlasting to those who fear him. (17)*

Psalm 148:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12ab, 12c-14c

Response: *Let us praise the name of the Lord (12c)*

Second Reading:

Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39 *Who will separate us from the love of Christ?*

Romans 12: 9- 12 *Do not let your love be a pretence...have a profound respect for one another (In verse 9, omit the phrase, "as much as brothers should")*

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8a *Your body is a temple of the Spirit.*

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8a *If I am without love, it will do me no good whatever.*

Colossians 3:12-17 *Above all have love, which is the bond of perfection.*

1 John 3:18-24 *Our love is to be something real and active*

1 John 4:7-12 *God is love.*

Gospel Acclamation:

1 John 4:8 and 11 *God is love; let us love one another as he has loved us.*

1 John 4:12 *If we love one another God will live in us in perfect love.*

1 John 4:7b *Everyone who loves is born of God and knows him.*

Gospel:

Luke 12: 22- 31 *Do not worry about your life... set your heart upon the Kingdom*

Mathew 5:13-16 *You are the light of the world.*

Matthew 19:3-6 *So then, what God has united, man must not divide.*

Matthew 22: 35-40 *This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is similar to it.*
John 15: 9-12 *Remain in my love.*

John 17:20-26 *May they be completely one.*

John 15: 12-16 *This is my commandment: love one another.*

Music & Hymns

A Blessing, C. Willcock, Gather Australia

A Journey Remembered, K. Bates, As One Voice Vol. 2, Singing the Liturgy Whispers

A New Commandment, Tune: arranged L. F. Bartlett, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy

A Trusting Psalm, K. Bates, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia

All Creatures of Our God and King, Text: trans W. H. Draper, Tune: harm R. V. Williams, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia

Blessing the Marriage, J. Bell & G. Maule, As One Voice Vol. 2

Blest Are They, D. Haas, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy

Bridegroom and Bride, J. Bell & G. Maule, Tune: Slane, As One Voice Vol. 2, Gather Australia

Come As You Are, D. Browne, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy

Come to a Wedding, Text: S. Murray, Tune: Bunesan, Gather Australia

Come, on this Wedding Day, Text: S. Murray, Tune: R.V. Williams, Gather Australia

Emmaus Song, Monica Brown, A Special Collection

Everlasting Your Love, B. Hurd, As One Voice Vol. 1

God Beyond All Names, B. Farrell, As One Voice Vol. 2, Gather Australia

God Is Love, D. Haas, Gather Australia

God is Love, the Source of Goodness, Text: P. Inwood, Tune: American Folk Hymn, Catholic Worship Book

God, You Made the Earth and Heavens, Text: D. Dufner, Tune adapt: E. Hodges, Singing the Liturgy

Hear Us Now, Our God and Father, Text: H. Huxhold & J. Newton,

Tune: Hyfryold – R. H. Prichard, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia

I Have Loved You, M. Joncas, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia

In Love we Choose to Live, J. Cotter, As One Voice Vol. 2

In Perfect Charity, R. de Bruyn, As One Voice Vol. 1

Jesus, Come to Us, D. Haas, As One Voice Vol. 1, Singing the Liturgy

Love Divine All Loves Excelling, Text: C. Wesley, Tune: Hyfrodol, R.H. Prichard, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy

Love is His Word, L. Connaughton, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia

Love is the Greatest Gift of All, E. Marshall, As One Voice Vol. 2

Love is the Greatest Gift of All, Monica Brown, God Delights in You

Love is the Sunlight, Text: B. Jacobson, Tune: Bunesan, Singing the Liturgy

May Christ Live in our Hearts, S. Toolan, Catholic Worship Book

May the Grace of Christ, Text: J. Newton, Tune: C. F. Witt, Singing the Liturgy

May You be United in Love, NLMC Publications, Gather Australia

Morning Has Broken, Text: E. Farjean, Tune: Bunesan, As One Voice Vol. 1, Australian Hymn Book, Gather Australia

No Greater Love, M. Joncas, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy

Now Thank We All Our God, C. Winkworth, As One Voice Vol. 1, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia

O Father, All Creating, Text: J. Ellerton, Tune: S. S. Wesley, Singing the Liturgy,

O God Hear Us, B. Hurd, As One Voice Vol. 1

O Perfect Love, Text: D. Gurney, Tune: R. R. Terry, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic

Worship Book

On Eagle's Wings, M. Joncas, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia
One in Love, Monica Brown, Praise and Blessings
Peace, Joy and Happiness, J. Wise, Catholic Worship Book
Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven, Text: H. F. Lyte, Tune: J. Goss, As One Voice Vol. 1, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia
Sing a New Song, Sing a New Song, Text: J. P. McAuley, Tune: R. Connolly, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia
Song for the Journey, E. Marshall, As One Voice Vol. 2
Summoned by Love, Text: M. O'Brien, Tune: T. Watts, As One Voice Vol. 2
The Beatitudes, P. Kearney, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy
The Lord is My Shepherd, B. Boniwell, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia
The Lord's My Shepherd, Tune: J. S. Irving, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy
They'll Know We Are Christians, P. Schottes, As One Voice Vol. 1
This Day Was Made By the Lord, C. Walker, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia
This is My Will, Text: J. Quinn, Tune: Jesu Duleis Memoria, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia
To Let Love Run, K. Bates, Singing the Liturgy
Ubi Caritas, J. Berthier, Gather Australia
Warm Our Hearts, E. Marshall, As One Voice Vol. 1
We are Many Parts, M. Haugen, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy
We Have Been Told, D. Haas, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy
Wedding Blessing, R. Glover, Gather Australia
What Kind of Love Is It, Monica Brown, One Moment
Where is Your Song, My Lord, P. Kearney, As One Voice Vol. 1
Where There is Charity and Love, R. Connolly, Australian Hymn Book, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia
Where There is Love, D. Haas, As One Voice Vol. 1
Wherever You Go, G. Norbet, As One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia

PSALMS

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord, M. Haugen, Gather Australia
The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord, R. Kreutz, Catholic Worship Book
I will bless the Lord at all times, Response: N. Ansell, Catholic Worship Book
Taste and see that the Lord is good, T. Barr, As One Voice Vol. 2
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, R. Proulx, Catholic Worship Book
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, C. Willcock, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia, Singing the Liturgy
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, S. Dean, Gather Australia
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, J. Wood, Gather Australia
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, R. Heagney, Psalms for the Church's Year
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, B. Hurd, As One Voice Vol. 1
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, S. Robinson, As One Voice Vol. 1
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord, Response: K. Boschetti, Singing the Liturgy
The Lord is kind and merciful, C. Willcock, Catholic Worship Book, Gather Australia
The Lord is kind and merciful, J. Cotter, As One Voice Vol. 2
The Lord is kind and merciful, D. Mews, Catholic Worship Book
The Lord's kindness is everlasting to those who fear him, Response: R. J.

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Batastini, Verses: J. Gelineau, Catholic Worship Book
Happy are those who do what the Lord commands, Response: A. G. Murray,

R. Carroll, Verses: J. Gelineau, Catholic Worship Book
O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways, P. Inwood, As
One Voice Vol. 1, Gather Australia
Happy are those who fear the Lord, K. Boschetti, Catholic Worship Book
Happy are those who fear the Lord, A. G. Murray, Catholic Worship Book
The Lord is compassionate to all his creatures, R. Carroll, Catholic Worship Book

Additional Resources and Website Links

1. Resources for Planning the Wedding Liturgy – Explanation and structure of the wedding liturgy both within Mass and without Mass.

a) LabOra:

The Liturgical Commission has published a huge collection liturgical texts on CD. The resource is called LabOra Worship and it enables the user to prepare the liturgy and produce participation booklets.

b) Helpful Websites For Marriage Preparation:

Visit our ***Relationship Programme Page*** on this site for Marriage Preparation programmes in Sydney, or contact our office Emmaus Productions for experienced and qualified Marriage Education Facilitators, (02) 484 0252.

www.engagedencounter.org Catholic Engaged Encounter provides marital preparation for couples including non-Catholics

www.wwme.org Worldwide Marriage Encounter

www.centacare.org Marriage and Relationship Education: provides premarriage education courses for those contemplating marriage

www.newadvent.org Catholic Encyclopedia outlines the earliest ritual of Christian marriage.

c) Other resources:

A Blessing for your Marriage

with reflections on Wildflowers and flowers

May your life together be blessed with every colour and hue.

The soft greens for the fresh new beginnings of this time...

The golds for the joy and the richness of these days...

The greens for the strengths already evident in your relationship...

The browns for the tough times which come into every Union in different ways...

The dark greens for the peace and gratitude of the gift you both are to each other in the world...

The red for love which always seeks the best for the beloved, a love which builds up, not tears down.

A blue which takes you on a journey beyond your wildest imagining.

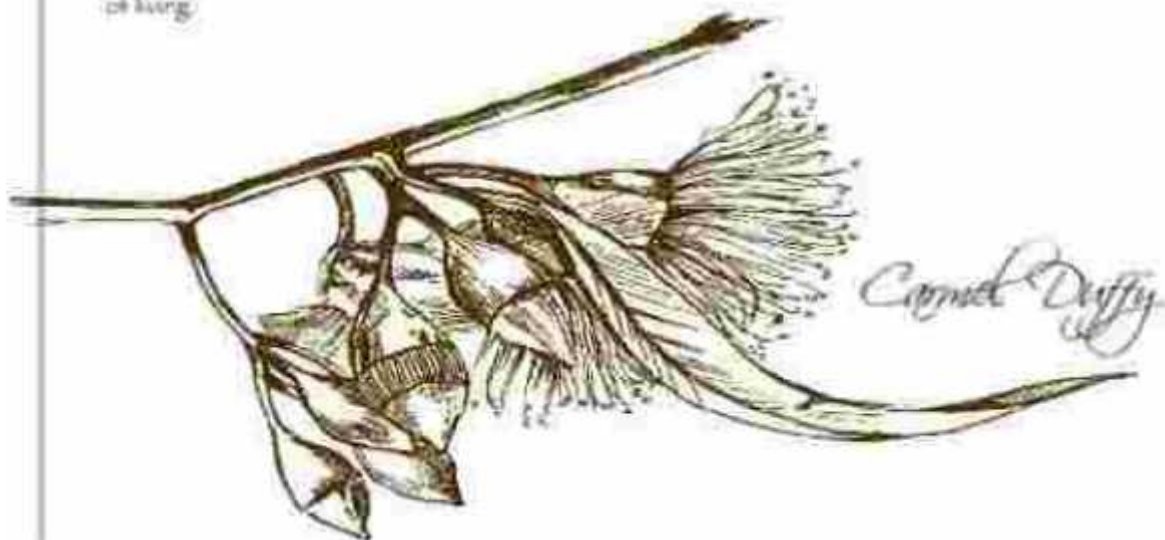
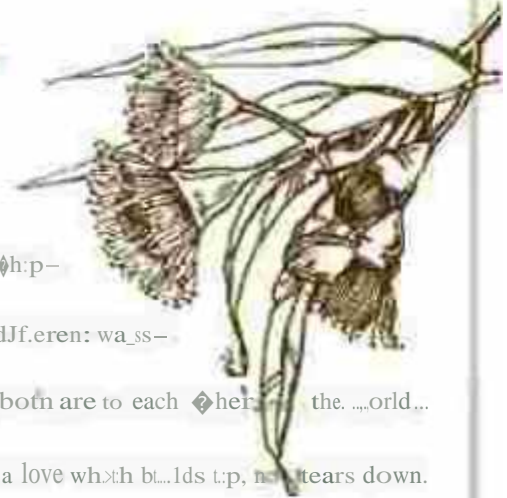
Through the fun times and the harsh times, may the passion of your love be deep and strong...

And just as each wildflower has its own shape, beauty, texture and character may you always

encourage each other's uniqueness and special beauty and character.

And like the Autumnal wildflower, may you grow together, with abundance and the pure joy

of living.



A Marriage Blessing Ritual

Opening: (*Names of couple*), in many cultures it is believed that the human soul shares characteristics with all things divine and so today we pray for you a blessing from the four elements and the four directions which will help you build a happy and successful union.

Parent 1: Let us turn to the East...

Blessed be this union with the gifts of the East and the element of Air – we invite you together to breathe in openness, communication of the heart; and purity of mind and body.

From the East may you receive the gift of new beginnings. As the sun rises each day may you see new opportunities for growth and stir up energy to face each new day with a measure of wild abandon, being prepared to be surprised.

Like Air, may you know the support of family and friends and may the breath of your love connect you to all who need your support and care.

Parent 2: Let us turn to face the South...

Blessed be this union with the gifts of the South and the element of Fire for energy, passion, creativity and the warmth of a loving home.

A candle or fire symbol is presented to the couple.

From the South, may you receive the gifts of trust and faithfulness as you continue to nurture each other and your family.

In marriage you offer absolute trust to one another and vow to keep your hearts open in sorrow as well as in joy.

Like Fire, may you always kindle passion for each other and for all of life;
may you find strength to live in truth.

Parent 3: Let us turn to face the West...

Blessed be this union with the gifts of the West and the element of Water for your capacity to feel emotion.

The couple are sprinkled with water, or place their hands together in a bowl of fresh water

From the West, may you know goodness and a peaceful spirit in all your dealings.

Like water, may your relationship be washed with clarity, a strong measure of forgiveness and especially love.

Parent 4: Let us turn to face the North...

Blessed be this union with the gifts of the North and the element of Earth...*a bowl of earth is presented to the couple:*

From the North may you be blessed with patience, gentleness and kindness for the dry, harsh times.

...

The Earth will feed you and enrich you, and help you to build a stable home to which you may always return.

Like earth, may your relationship be grounded; blessed with courage and strength to endure whatever comes; faithful, creative and ever-emerging like the first green shoot of a seed.

Closing blessing:

As a child holds a shell to her ear and listens deeply to the mystery therein,
may you hold each other close and listen deeply to the ever-unfolding mystery in and between each other.

May you always desire the best for each other and in your love you will show God, who is love, to the world.

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A Marriage Blessing after reflecting on Celtic Knots.

*Celtic Knots form the basis of Celtic art and design and here they form the basis
for this marriage blessing:*

May your lives together be blessed with beauty and constancy;
As you walk the road of life together
 may the twists and turns you encounter
 be filled with joy, hope, compassion and love;
May your troubles be few;
May your love be constant and trusting, yet flexible and forgiving;
May you always feel the connection of family and friends
 supporting and encouraging you;
May your love offer each other space to grow
 and may your love be inclusive;
In the patterning of your lives
 may you always see the mystery of God's presence
 sustaining, nourishing, guiding.

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~ Table Grace For A Wedding Feast ~

Loving God, Source of all blessings,
 from you every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.
You hold all of Creation in the palm of your hand.

You made woman and man like yourself in their power to know and love.
You call them into the journey of life together.

We are gathered here to celebrate this call for and
Today and always, bless them with generosity
 to share their gifts with one another
 and to give new heart to your people.

Bless our gathering here today (tonight).
Bless the food and drink that we share.
May it become the source of life for us and for those beyond our table.
We ask this in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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Text by Erica Marshall