

# *My* *Wedding* *Guide* *OUTSIDE of Mass*



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## GUIDELINES FOR A WEDDING OUTSIDE OF HOLY MASS

*“The engaged couple...should be given catechesis not only about the Church’s teaching on Marriage and the family but also about the Sacrament and its rites, prayers, and readings, so that they may be able to celebrate it thoughtfully and fruitfully.” (Order of Celebrating Matrimony, no. 17).*

This celebration is about the marriage between a baptized Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic Christian. Usually marriages are celebrated within the context of a holy Mass. But due to fact that Catholics and baptized Non-Catholics do not hold to the same doctrines, the non Catholic would not be able to receive holy Communion. Therefore holy Mass is (usually) not celebrated. Never the less, this marriage without a Mass is a valid Catholic marriage. It is also a Sacrament because the bride and groom are both baptized. The main difference between a holy Mass and a Service is that there is no Liturgy of the Eucharist. This form is also used, when there is no priest available and a deacon presides over the wedding.

What makes a marriage a “marriage,” is the exchange of vows of groom and bride, as well as the Nuptial Blessing over the couple. This “I DO” seals the contract and the priest/deacon are an official Church witness to their vows. The minister of this Sacrament is not the priest, but the groom and the bride themselves. When we have the couple (matter) and they give each other their vows (spoken words = form), then it becomes a Sacrament.

So that there will not be any “surprises” at the ceremony, the couple engages in marriage preparation, which goes beyond the parish itself, even to become part of a diocesan endeavor to ensure that the couple is well prepared to say “yes” to the questions asked before the actual vows. These questions deal with an undying promise to love and to accept children lovingly from the hands of GOD, and to rear them “according to the law of Christ and His Church.”

To seal their vows and desire, they exchange the blessed rings, which they will now wear for the rest of their earthly lives, as a reminder of their decision “to love and to hold . . . until death does us part.”

## Introductory Rites

### Entrance Rite

At the appointed time, a procession is formed. The priest/ deacon, then the groom, grandparents, parents, grooms men and brides maids, best man and maid of honor, flower girl and ring bearer, and finally the bride with her father. This is a solemn entrance, worthy of a King of Kings, who awaits the vows of His subjects.



### Greeting

As we begin all things with the sign of the cross, so do we here. We trace the sign of our faith, the cross, on our very own bodies, to remind us that we are to be worthy followers of Jesus who suffered and died for us on the cross.

### Opening Prayer

The priest then calls upon GOD our Father for His blessings upon what we are about to celebrate.

## Liturgy of the Word



There are several readings, one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament. The Responsorial Psalm links these two readings. It is important to have two readings, since the New Testament reveals the Old Testament, while the Old Testament conceals the New Testament. The Church presents us with a choice of readings, that pertain to the Sacrament in an eminent manner.

### First Reading

1. [Male and female he created them](#) (Genesis 1:26-28, 31a)
2. [The two of them become one body](#) (Genesis 2:18-24)
3. [In his love for Rebekah, Isaac found solace after the death of his mother](#)  
(Genesis 24:48-51, 58-67)
4. [May the Lord of heaven prosper you both. May he grant you mercy and](#)

- peace (Tobit 7:6-14)
5. [Allow us to live together to a happy old age](#) (Tobit 8:4b-8)
  6. [The woman who fears the Lord is to be praised](#) (Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31)
  7. [Stern as death is love](#) (Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a)
  8. [Like the sun rising in the Lord's heavens, the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home](#) (Sirach 26:1-4, 13-16)
  9. [I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah](#) (Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a)

### Responsorial Psalm

If possible, the Responsorial Psalm is to be sung. The Psalms are attributed to King David, who composed them and sang them on a lyre. There are 150 Psalms, which pertain to all conditions of life - these here are especially chosen for this occasion.



1. [The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord](#) (Psalm 33)
2. [I will bless the Lord at all times](#) (Psalm 34)
3. [The Lord is kind and merciful](#) (Psalm 103)
4. [Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord's commands](#) (Psalm 112)
5. [Blessed are those who fear the Lord](#) (Psalm 128)
6. [How good is the Lord to all](#) (Psalm 145)
7. [Let all praise the name of the Lord](#) (Psalm 148)

### Second Reading

1. What will separate us from the love of Christ? (Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39)
2. [Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God](#) (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18)
3. [Welcome one another as Christ welcomed you](#) (Romans 15:1b-3a, 5-7, 13)
4. [Your body is a temple of the Spirit](#) (Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20)
5. [If I do not have love, I gain nothing](#) (Corinthians 12:31-13:8a)
6. [One Body and one Spirit](#) (Ephesians 4:1-6)
7. [This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church](#) (Ephesians 5:2a, 21-33)
8. [The God of peace will be with you](#) (Philippians 4:4-9)
9. [And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection](#) (Colossians 3:12-17)
10. [Let marriage be held in honor by all](#) (Hebrews 13:1-4a, 5-6b)

11. [Be of one mind, sympathetic, loving toward one another](#) (1 Peter 3:1-9)
12. [Love in deed and in truth](#) (1 John 3:18-24)
13. [God is love](#) (1 John 4:7-12)
14. [Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast of the Lamb](#) (Revelation 19:1, 5-9a)

### Gospel Acclamation

The acclamation can be omitted if no cantor is available.

### Gospel

The Gospels hold a preeminent place in Catholic Liturgy. Aren't they the account of Christ's words and actions? This is also the reason why we stand for the proclamation of the Gospel.



1. [Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven](#) (Matthew 5:1-12a)
2. [You are the light of the world](#) (Matthew 5:13-16)
3. [A wise man built his house on rock](#) (Matthew 7:21, 24-29)
4. [What God has united, man must not separate](#) (Matthew 19:3-6)
5. [This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it.](#) (Matthew 22:35-40)
6. [They are no longer two, but one flesh](#) (Mark 10:6-9)
7. [Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee](#) (John 2:1-11)
8. [Remain in my love](#) (John 15:9-12)
9. [This is my commandment: love one another](#) (John 15:12-16)
10. [That they may be brought to perfection as one](#) (John 17:20-26)

### Homily

The priest will expound on the Sacrament about to take place and exhorts the congregation to support the couple in their endeavor to unite in the name of the LORD.



## The Celebration of Matrimony

### Address and Statement of Intentions

After we have listened to the Word of GOD, the priest asks the couple to come forward and he will ask them a few questions. The answers are spoken out loud, so that all can hear their intention.

+ N. & N. have you come here to enter into Marriage without coercion, freely and wholeheartedly? - the couple responds with: "I have."

+ Are you prepared, as you follow the path of Marriage, to love and honor each other for as long as you both shall live? - the couple responds with: "I am."

+ Are you prepared to accept children lovingly from God and to bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church? - the couple responds with: "I am."

### Exchange of Consent

Then the groom, then the bride state the following:

I N., take you N., to be my wife/husband. I promise to be faithful to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love you and to honor you all the days of my life.



The priest as a minister of GOD, receives their consent and blesses their decision.

### Blessing and Exchange of Rings



As an outward sign of their inward disposition, they now present each other with a ring, which is first blessed by the priest and then placed on the ring finger of the spouse, first by the groom, then the bride, while saying:

N., receive this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

### The Universal Prayer (Intercessions)

Since the Church is a community (Church militant, Church suffering, Church triumphant), we rejoice when others rejoice and we are sad when others are sad. This is the moment to look beyond our celebration and pray for all needs.

### The Lord's Prayer

This is the one prayer that unites all Christians, and all are invited to pray together as Jesus Himself taught us. "For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory, now and forever," may be added at the end.

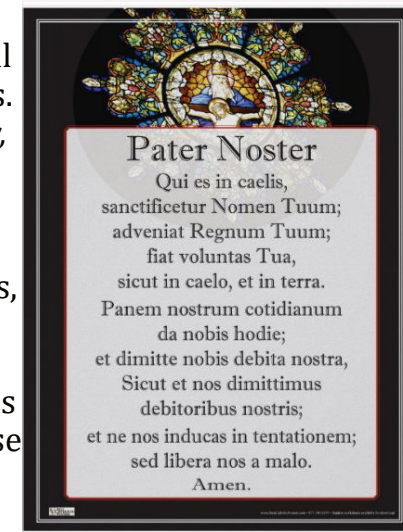
### Nuptial Blessing

The priest asks that God give the couple special graces, including fidelity, the blessing of children, and a long life together. The prayer is filled with Scriptural allusions, going all the way back to the book of Genesis and its description of the way God created the universe and brought together the first man and woman to be "one flesh". Because this prayer is so beautiful, it is printed below:

O God, who by your mighty power  
created all things out of nothing,  
and, when you had set in place  
the beginnings of the universe,  
formed man and woman in your own image,  
making the woman an inseparable helpmate to the man,  
that they might be no longer two, but one flesh,  
and taught that what you were pleased to make one  
must never be divided;

O God, who consecrated the bond of Marriage  
by so great a mystery  
that in the wedding covenant you foreshadowed  
the Sacrament of Christ and his Church;

O God, by whom woman is joined to man  
and the companionship they had in the beginning  
is endowed with the one blessing  
not forfeited by original sin  
nor washed away by the flood.



Look now with favor on these your servants,  
joined together in Marriage,  
who ask to be strengthened by your blessing.  
Send down on them the grace of the Holy Spirit  
and pour your love into their hearts,  
that they may remain faithful in the Marriage covenant.

May the grace of love and peace  
abide in your daughter [name],  
and let her always follow the example of those holy women  
whose praises are sung in the Scriptures.

May her husband entrust his heart to her,  
so that, acknowledging her as his equal  
and his joint heir to the life of grace,  
he may show her due honor  
and cherish her always  
with the love that Christ has for his Church.

And now, Lord, we implore you:  
may these your servants  
hold fast to the faith and keep your commandments;  
made one in the flesh,  
may they be blameless in all they do;  
and with the strength that comes from the Gospel,  
may they bear true witness to Christ before all;  
(may they be blessed with children,  
and prove themselves virtuous parents,  
who live to see their children's children.)

And grant that,  
reaching at last together the fullness of years  
for which they hope,

they may come to the life of the blessed  
in the Kingdom of Heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

## Conclusion of the Celebration

### Final Blessing

There is a final blessing invoked upon the newlyweds, which must carry them from now on through life. May our good LORD bless and keep them is not just our wish, but also the wish of GOD almighty.



### Announcement

This ceremony concludes with the announcement that they are now married. The announcement goes like:  
Ladies and Gentlemen, may I present to you:

**Mr. & Mrs. N & N LAST-NAME**



All applaud and the priest suggests something that they have been waiting for so long:  
"You may kiss the bride."

### Recessional

The recessional hymn begins and the newlywed couple goes forth from the sanctuary into the world, becoming a witness to the world that just as they married, Jesus Christ has a bride, His Church, which He wants to lead into heaven.



## Catechism of the Catholic Church

### THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

# 1601 "The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament." [CIC, can. 1055 # 1; GS 48 # 1]"

### MARRIAGE IN GOD'S PLAN

# 1602 "Sacred Scripture begins with the creation of man and woman in the image and likeness of God and concludes with a vision of "the wedding-feast of the Lamb." [Rev 19:7, 9; Gen 1:26-27] Scripture speaks throughout of marriage and its "mystery," its institution and the meaning God has given it, its origin and its end, its various realizations throughout the history of salvation, the difficulties arising from sin and its renewal "in the Lord" in the New Covenant of Christ and the Church. [1 Cor 7:39; cf. Eph 5:31-32]"

### Marriage in the order of creation

# 1603 "The intimate community of life and love which constitutes the married state has been established by the Creator and endowed by him with its own proper laws.... God himself is the author of marriage." [GS 48 # 1] The vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator. Marriage is not a purely human institution despite the many variations it may have undergone through the centuries in different cultures, social structures, and spiritual attitudes. These differences should not cause us to forget its common and permanent characteristics. Although the dignity of this institution is not transparent everywhere with the same clarity, [GS 47 # 2] some sense of the greatness of the matrimonial union exists in all cultures. "The well-being of the individual person and of both human and Christian society is closely bound up with the healthy state of conjugal and family life." [GS 47 # 1]"

# 1604 "God who created man out of love also calls him to love the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being. For man is created in the image and likeness of God who is himself love. [Gen 1:27; 1 Jn 4:8, 16] Since God created him man and woman, their mutual love becomes an image of the absolute and unending love with which God loves man. It is good, very good, in the Creator's eyes. And this love which God blesses is intended to be fruitful and to be realized in the common work of watching over creation: "And God blessed them, and God said to them: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it.'" [Gen 1:28; cf. 1:31]"

# 1605 "Holy Scripture affirms that man and woman were created for one another: "It is not good that the man should be alone." [Gen 2:18] The woman, "flesh of his flesh," i.e., his counterpart, his equal, his nearest in all things, is given to him by God as a "helpmate"; she thus represents God from whom comes our help. [Cf. Gen 2:18-25] "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." [Gen 2:24] The Lord himself shows that this signifies an unbreakable union of their two lives by recalling what the plan of the Creator had been "in the beginning": "So they are no longer two, but one flesh." [Mt 19:6]"



### CATHOLIC WEDDING HYMNS:

**Air** – G. F. Handel

**Air on the G String** – J. S. Bach

**Amazing Grace** – The O'Neill Brothers

**Ave Maria** – Franz Schubert

**Be Not Afraid** – Dufford, S.J.

**Bridal Chorus** – R. Wagner

**Canon in D** – J. Pachelbel

**Canon in F** – The O'Neill Brothers

**Covenant Hymn** – R. Cooney, G. Daigle

**Friends** – Smith

**Hornpipe** – G. F. Handel

**How Beautiful** – Twila Paris

Hymn – Vangelis

Hymne – Vangelis

**I Will be Here** – Steven Curtis

Chapman

**Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring** – J. S. Bach

**Not For Tongues of Heaven's Angels**

– T. Dudley-Smith, M.

**Ode to Joy** – L. Beethoven

**On Eagle's Wings** – Joncas

**Panis Angelicus** – C. Franck

**Reminiscent Joy** – Tim & Ryan O'Neill

**Rondeau** – J. J. Mouret

**Set Your Heart on the Higher Gifts**

– S. Warner

**Taste and See** – M. Moore

**The Ash Grove** – Traditional Welsh

**The Servant Song** – R. Gillard

**Trumpet Tune** – H. Purcell / J.

Clarke

**Trumpet Voluntary** – J. Clarke

**We Have Been Told** – D. Haas –

**Wedding March** – F. Mendelssohn

**When Love is Found** – B. Wren





# NOTES