

A SERVICE FOR MARRIAGE

FIEC First Form¹

A WELCOME

Use a form of words that achieves the following:

- a connection to the group;
- an understanding of who you are and your role as celebrant;
- and any necessary housekeeping.

You may include an instruction to get the group to stand.

PROCESSIONAL

We have come together here in the sight of God, and in the presence of this congregation, to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony; which is an honourable state of life, instituted from the beginning by God himself, signifying to us the spiritual union that is between Christ and his Church.

Christ adorned and beautified matrimony with his presence, and with the first sign by which he revealed his glory, at the marriage in Cana of Galilee; and holy Scripture commands that all should hold it in honour.

It is therefore not to be entered upon unadvisedly, lightly, or merely to satisfy physical desires; but prayerfully, with careful thought and with reverence for God, duly considering the purposes for which it was ordained.

It was ordained for the procreation of children and that they might be brought up in the nurture and instruction of the Lord, to the praise of his holy name.

It was ordained so that those to whom God has granted the gift of marriage might live a chaste and holy life, as befits members of Christ's body.

And it was ordained for the mutual companionship, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

Into this holy manner of life [*Groom*] and [*Bride*] come now to be joined. Therefore, if anyone can show any just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him speak now, or hereafter remain silent.

Speaking to the persons to be married, the minister says:

I charge you both, as you will answer before God, who is the judge of all and from whom no secrets are hidden, that if either of you know any reason why you may not lawfully be joined together in matrimony, you now confess it.

For be assured that those who marry otherwise than God's word allows are not joined together by God, neither is their matrimony lawful in his sight.

THE CONSENT

The minister says to the man:

[Groom], will you have [Bride] as your wife, to live together, as God has ordained, in the holy state of matrimony? Will you love her, cherish her, honour and protect her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her, as long as you both shall live?

The man answers:

I will

Then the minister says to the woman:

[Bride], will you have [Groom] as your husband, to live together, as God has ordained, in the holy state of matrimony? Will you love him, obey him, honour and protect him, in sickness and in health and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him, as long as you both shall live?

The woman answers:

I will

If the bride is to be given away, the minister says:

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

THE BETROTHAL AND WEDDING

I [Groom] take you [Bride] to be my wife, according to God's holy ordinance: 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, until we are parted by death. And to this I pledge you my word.

I [Bride], take you [Groom] to be my husband, according to God's holy ordinance: 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 obey, until we are parted by death. And to this I pledge you my word.

EXCHANGE OF WEDDING RINGS

With this ring I wed you, with my body I worship you, with all that I am and all that I have I honour you: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The minister says:

Let us pray. Eternal God, creator and preserver of all mankind, giver of all spiritual grace and author of everlasting life: send your blessing upon this man and this woman whom we bless in your name; that as Isaac and Rebecca lived faithfully together, so [Groom] and [Bride] may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant made between them, of which this ring given and received is a token and pledge, and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to your laws; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Then the minister joins their right hands together and says:

Those whom God has joined together let not man put asunder.

THE DECLARATION OF THE MARRIAGE

The minister addresses the people:

[Groom] and [Bride] have now witnessed to their mutual consent before God and this company; they have pledged their solemn word to each other; and they have confirmed it by the giving and receiving of a ring and by the joining of hands. I therefore declare them to be husband and wife: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

And he adds this blessing:

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 fill you with all spiritual blessing and grace, that you may so live together in this life, that in the world to come you may have life everlasting. **Amen.**

BIBLE READING(S)

ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER

PRAYERS

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

A prayer for the blessing of eternal life:

God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless these your servants and sow the seed of eternal life in their hearts, that whatever they learn in your holy word they may indeed fulfil. Look in love upon them, Father, and bless them with the blessing you sent on Abraham and Sarah that, obeying your will and secure in your protection, they may abide in your love to their lives' end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A prayer for the blessing of children:

We praise you, Father, for creating us in your own image and for your gracious gift whereby mankind is increased; give to [Groom] and [Bride] the blessing of children, and grant them the wisdom and grace to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, to your praise and honour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A prayer for the blessing of mutual love and faithfulness:

Almighty God, who by joining man and woman together taught us from the beginning that we should not separate what you have joined as one; we praise you that you have consecrated the state of matrimony to such an excellent purpose that in it is signified the spiritual marriage and unity between Christ and his Church. Look mercifully on these your servants, that this man may love his wife, according to your word, as Christ loved his bride the Church, and gave himself for it, cherishing it as himself; and also that this woman may be loving and generous, responsive and faithful to her husband. O Lord, bless them both, and grant them to inherit your everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

or...

Lord God, you have consecrated marriage to be a sign of the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church; bless these your servants that they may love, honour, and cherish each other in faithfulness, patience, wisdom and true godliness; may their home be a place of love and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Then the minister says:

Almighty God, who created our first parents and sanctified and joined them together in marriage, pour upon you the riches of his love, sanctify and bless you, that you may please him both in body and soul, and live together in holy love to your lives' end. Amen.

or

God the Father enrich you with his grace, God the Son make you holy in his love, God the Holy Spirit strengthen you with his joy. The Lord bless you and keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

SIGNING OF THE REGISTER

RECESSIONAL

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