

Wedding Arrangements

St. Mary Catholic Church – 708-326-9300 – www.StMaryMokena.com
19515 South 115th Avenue, Post Office Box 2, Mokena, Illinois 60448-0002

(January 2010 Edition)

Congratulations on your forthcoming wedding! May it be for you a time of rejoicing as well as an affirmation of your faith in Jesus Christ, who blessed the wedding feast at Cana, and who is here to bless your new life together as well.

To assist you in planning and celebrating the religious dimension of your total wedding celebration, this handbook is based on the questions people ask most frequently concerning weddings at Saint Mary Church. Your questions and comments are most welcome, as this handbook is continually updated because of your input and feedback.

Wedding Dates: Arrangements for weddings are made with the pastor by the bride and groom about a year in advance of the proposed wedding date (and definitely before putting a deposit down on a reception hall). This requirement insures that there is adequate time available for participation in the program of sacramental marriage preparation. If people request a date in less than a year before the wedding, it is necessary to work out the details of the marriage preparation program before the wedding date may be confirmed. If, at any time, you are thinking of postponing or cancelling your wedding date, please inform the church office immediately, so that the date you selected may then be opened up for other couples to consider.

Place of the Wedding: According to church law, weddings are to be celebrated in the parish church of either the bride or the groom. Therefore, either the bride or the groom should be a practicing Catholic and an established member of the parish, or the son or daughter of established parishioners. Because of the size of our parish community, we cannot host weddings for people who are not regular established members of St. Mary Parish.

After the Wedding: After your wedding day, please remember to register as a married couple in the parish where you will make your new home. You will have received a special blessing from your Church on your wedding day. Please keep that nuptial blessing alive and well throughout your married life by your regular attendance at Sunday Mass, and active participation in the life of your local parish community!

Wedding Times: Weddings may be celebrated on most Saturdays at 12:00 noon and 2:30 p.m. Friday evening weddings at about 5:00 p.m. are also available. Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays at St. Mary Church because of afternoon Baptisms and the regular Sunday Mass schedule. Weddings are discouraged during Lent, and are not permitted at all during Holy Week. Due to logistics and personnel, weddings cannot be simultaneously held in our main parish church and in our original Old St. Mary's Church.

Ceremony or Mass: When both the bride and the groom are practicing Catholics, a Wedding Mass may be celebrated. In inter-faith marriages, that is, between a Catholic and a non-Catholic person, a Wedding Ceremony is celebrated. During Lent, only a very simple Wedding Ceremony may be celebrated. Since many people have asked, a Wedding Mass usually lasts about an hour, and a Wedding Ceremony takes about thirty minutes. Time for pictures after weddings is very limited.

Clergy at the Wedding: It is the duty of the clergy of this parish to officiate at all the weddings in this church. However, because of special friendship or being a relative to the bride or the groom, other priests or deacons may sometimes be invited by the pastor to either officiate or concelebrate at the wedding, as long as they agree to abide by the wedding customs of this parish. In inter-faith marriages, a non-Catholic minister may be invited to read one of the scriptures or to offer a prayer, according to the diocesan ecumenical directives. Please make your requests known right away.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM STEPS

There are seven steps to prepare for a wedding:

Step One: Initial Meeting with the Pastor. After making tentative arrangements through the church office, the couple meets with the pastor to confirm a wedding date. The pastor will complete a pre-nuptial questionnaire and ask them to provide certain documents for the church records. Here is a list of the most commonly requested documents:

- **Baptismal Certificates:** For Catholics, a newly-issued baptismal certificate from the church of baptism is needed. For non-Catholics, any church letter or certificate attesting to the date and place of baptism is acceptable.
- **Mixed Marriages:** When a Catholic wishes to marry a non-Catholic, the Catholic promises to remain a practicing Catholic, and to do all that is in their power to share their Catholic faith with their children, by having them baptized and raised as Catholic Christians.
- **Church Affidavits:** In some cases, parents or others who have known the bride/groom since they were of marriageable age, are asked to complete a simple church affidavit form. This document replaces the question asked at some non-Catholic weddings: "Is there any reason why this couple should not be married? Speak now, or forever hold your peace."
- **Canonical Witnesses:** In addition to the priest, two canonical witnesses are required for a valid sacramental celebration of Matrimony. In this country, they are called the best man and the maid of honor. Other groomsmen and bridesmaids are optional but permitted.

Step Two: FOCCUS Sessions. In preparation for the Pre-Cana program, couples complete an insightful questionnaire that promotes discussion of the various aspects of Christian married life. The word FOCCUS stands for "Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding, and Study." About a week or so after completing the FOCCUS form, the couple meets with a member of our Pre-Cana team to obtain their FOCCUS results. It is important that couples complete the FOCCUS and obtain the results before attending a Pre-Cana program at this parish or elsewhere.

Step Three: Pre-Cana Program. Our marriage preparation program is a requirement of St. Mary Parish and of the Diocese of Joliet. It focuses on *marriage* itself, rather than just on the *wedding*. A wedding is only for a day, but a marriage is for a lifetime. Engaged couples find Pre-Cana to be a personally rewarding and affirming experience that brings them even closer together in love as they prepare for the sacrament of Matrimony. Please remember that FOCCUS is a pre-requisite for attending any Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter, as it prepares you for these pre-marriage programs. Even if you are attending Pre-Cana elsewhere, we can still provide the FOCCUS for you. Here are some of the options for Pre-Cana programs:

- **St. Mary Parish Pre-Cana Program:** The parish office will contact you concerning the different options for Pre-Cana offered by our parish. Groups of engaged couples meet with a team of specially-trained married couples for this local program. There is no additional fee for parishioners who attend our parish Pre-Cana program. Other options follow below.
- **Diocesan Engaged Encounter:** Our parish Pre-Cana program is based on a diocesan weekend retreat called Engaged Encounter. We highly recommend this diocesan program. Information about dates can be obtained from the Diocesan Family Life Office at 815-838-5334. Engaged Encounter retreats are held at the diocesan pastoral center in Romeoville. There is an additional charge for this weekend program, but it is truly worth it.
- **Other Pre-Cana Programs:** Other parish Pre-Cana programs may be substituted for our parish Pre-Cana program when scheduling conflicts, due to work hours or living distance from the parish, are factors that complicate attendance at our parish Pre-Cana program.
- **Natural Family Planning:** As a follow-up to the Pre-Cana program, or even beforehand, we recommend that you investigate the many special advantages of NFP in fulfilling your responsibilities as Christian parents. Both the Diocese of Joliet and the Archdiocese of Chicago offer special training programs in this effective and ethical form of responsible family planning. For more information on this topic, please consult the resources found on page four of this wedding handbook.

Step Four: Liturgy Planning. After attending Pre-Cana, which prepares the couple for *marriage*, the couple then prepares for the *wedding* day. About two months or so before the wedding is an ideal time to plan the details of the liturgy.

- **Liturgy Planning:** The couple meets first with the priest who will be officiating at the wedding to plan the liturgy. In preparation for this planning meeting, the bride and groom should have already made selections from the various scripture readings, vows, and nuptial blessings which are found in the later sections of this parish wedding handbook.
- **Music Planning:** After planning the liturgy with the priest, the couple may discuss any remaining music questions with our parish music director. Our music staff is contracted to provide music for all weddings in our parish church. However, qualified singers and other outside musicians may sometimes be allowed to assist our church music staff in providing religious music for weddings in our parish.
- **Decoration Planning:** After the liturgy has been planned with the priest, please contact the parish Wedding Coordinator, if necessary, for any additional questions about flowers and other miscellaneous wedding decorations.

Step Five: Civil Marriage License. Couples must obtain a civil marriage license from Will County, since that is where our church is located.

- The Will County Clerk's Office is located at 302 N. Chicago Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432. Please call them at 815-740-4626 to confirm their office hours, for driving directions, and for their marriage license requirements. The civil marriage license is valid the day after it is issued, and then for sixty days thereafter.
- You must bring the civil marriage license to the rehearsal, unless you have given it to the priest beforehand. The wedding cannot occur without this legal document, and we will not even conduct a rehearsal without it. Please remember to bring the keepsake marriage certificate included in the same packet from the County Clerk. This special keepsake wedding certificate is usually filled out before the rehearsal.

Step Six: Rehearsal. Rehearsals are usually scheduled the evening before the wedding at a mutually agreed-upon time. Other rehearsal times are possible as well, depending on the parish schedule and the availability of the parish staff.

- The complete bridal party, along with everyone who has a role in the liturgy, is needed at the rehearsal. Stand-ins can be used if it is impossible for someone to be at the rehearsal.
- Please be on time for the rehearsal, especially when there is more than one rehearsal on the same day. The second wedding rehearsal will not be delayed if your rehearsal starts late, so please be on time for your wedding rehearsal.
- Please bring the wedding fees to the rehearsal along with the marriage license. The church donation is \$200, and is payable to St. Mary Church. The music fee is \$200, and is payable to the parish music director. If there are any other musicians, their fees are extra.
- If anyone needs to go to Confession in order to worthily receive Communion at a Wedding Mass, the priest will be available to hear Confessions after the wedding rehearsal.

Step Seven: Wedding Day. Here are some important reminders for the actual wedding day.

- All the members of the bridal party must arrive at church at least thirty minutes ahead of time. All wedding party members and guests are expected to act in a respectful and dignified manner at all times in church. Specific instructions about our behavioral expectations will be shared at the rehearsal.
- Time for pictures afterwards is contingent on the proper behavior of everyone in church, both during the wedding liturgy, and during the picture-taking session itself. We regret that several problems in this regard have made it necessary for the parish to communicate the consequences for any misbehavior in church, whether before, during, or after the wedding liturgy. Please inform all the members of the bridal party and your wedding guests of these important requirements to avoid any problems in church on your wedding day.

Other Important Information about Christian Marriage and Church Weddings

Natural Family Planning promotes healthy marriage relationships in addition to providing for responsible parenthood. We urge you to obtain information about NFP, and to discover its benefits to your marriage and family life.

- **Diocese of Joliet:** Natural Family Planning (NFP) is a natural method of regulating birth which is accepted by the Catholic Church and taught widely in the Diocese of Joliet. Through understanding and monitoring the cycles of the woman's body, couples are able to improve their chances of conceiving a child, or of delaying pregnancy, by being able to accurately predict the woman's time of greatest fertility. To receive information on the times and locations where NFP is taught, please call the Family Ministry Office of the Diocese of Joliet at 815-838-5334.
- **Archdiocese of Chicago:** Natural Family Planning (NFP) refers to natural methods used for avoiding or achieving pregnancy which are based on a couple's awareness of the woman's naturally occurring times of fertility and infertility. NFP is not the same as "calendar rhythm," which was based on a numerical estimate of when ovulation would occur. Couples using NFP observe easily-recognized physical signs and symptoms produced by the woman's body. These signs are reliable indications of the woman's times of fertility and infertility. Couples who learn to observe, record, and interpret these signs can use NFP very effectively to determine when pregnancy can and cannot occur during the woman's cycles. The NFP methods are completely natural and do not involve the use of any medications, drugs or devices. NFP is completely safe and has no harmful side effects. The self-knowledge that couples gain by using NFP is valuable in helping them to maintain good reproductive health. For more information about NFP class times, locations, and registrations, please call the Family Ministries Office of the Archdiocese of Chicago at 312-751-8273.

Marriage Encounter is a program that helps husbands and wives with healthy marriages to make them even better relationships. Couples married for five years are eligible for participation in Marriage Encounter. Please check out their website at wwme.org for more information.

For Your Marriage is a special website hosted by the American Bishops. It has valuable information about marriage and family life. We encourage you to check out this special resource online at ForYourMarriage.org. We hope you will consider exploring this website "for your marriage."

Catholic Brides now have a special wedding internet resource at CatholicBrides.com, which has invaluable background information about wedding symbols and various customs.

Everything I Have is Yours is a special booklet written by Bishop Sartain that helps couples understand "God's Plan for Marriage and the Gift of Life." It is available from the parish office as recommended reading for your marriage.

Living Together and Christian Commitment is a booklet by Dr. James Healy from the Joliet Diocesan Office of Family Life. It is also available from the parish office as recommended reading.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. If either the bride or the groom is not a Catholic, and they are not an active member of another church, we recommend that they consider become a Catholic Christian through the R.C.I.A., at the parish where they are either planning their wedding, or the parish where they will be living as a married couple. There is no pressure or any expectations in this regard, but shared religious beliefs and practices have been found to help promote marital harmony and happiness in many ways.

More Information. Please do not hesitate to discuss any of these marriage and wedding-related matters with the priest or deacon who will be officiating at your wedding, or with our parish wedding coordinator at 708-326-9308.

Wedding Liturgy Planning

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The wedding liturgy is a special time of prayer during which the bride and groom celebrate a Sacrament. Let everything in the Wedding Liturgy reflect the sacredness of this celebration of our Catholic Christian faith. These guidelines have been updated to reflect new liturgical directives for the Catholic celebration of Matrimony.

1. SETTING UP FOR THE WEDDING

Florists: The florist of your choice provides the personal flowers that the bridal party carries or wears for the wedding. These flowers may be dropped off in the narthex (vestibule) of church about an hour before the wedding, but it is better to bring them to the bride's house instead. The groomsmen usually need help putting on their flowers, so someone is needed for this role. Mothers already have their own corsages, thus additional flowers for them are unnecessary.

Altar Flowers are regularly provided by the parish throughout the year. However, if you want to have additional flowers in church, please arrange this in advance with the parish wedding coordinator.

Pew Bows are provided by the parish to reserve the pews where the bridal party and the parents are to be seated. If you want to have your own pew bows, please arrange this in advance with the parish wedding coordinator. Also, no candles are allowed down the main aisle in church, and no ribbons may block the pews on the main aisle.

Aisle Runners do not work well on our church carpet. If you want to use one anyway, please arrange this in advance with the parish wedding coordinator, since we have some in stock.

Unity Candles and Marian Bouquets are not part of the rites found in the official Catholic Wedding Ritual Book. The emphasis is rather on the Vows, the Rings, and the Nuptial Blessing. However, if you still wish to have a unity candle and Marian bouquet, it may be done at the end of the liturgy. For example, the bride and groom may go to the statue of Mary to place the bouquet, and then prayerfully light a candle together. However, these are unnecessary additions to the liturgy. Please contact the parish office for further information.

Children are always optional in the wedding party. If there is a flower girl, she may have only artificial flower petals. If there is a ring bearer, he never has the real wedding rings on his pillow. The children usually sit with family members instead of with the bridal party.

Personal Items of the bridesmaids and the groomsmen are collected for safekeeping before the wedding starts. These items include purses, coats, cell phones, etc. They are returned to the bridal party after the liturgy. Please designate a person for this role, and the parish wedding coordinator will assist them in these duties.

Rice and other items are not permitted to be thrown at the bride and the groom at the church doors or at anytime after the wedding. There is a receiving line in the narthex, where guests can congratulate the bride and groom instead.

Photographers and video personnel should arrive about an hour before the wedding. They must always introduce themselves to the priest and the wedding coordinator before setting up their equipment in church. They will be given special instructions concerning our parish policies for pictures and videos at weddings in our church.

Additional photographic equipment should always be stored well out of sight, both before and during the liturgy. Only dignified, formal wedding pictures may be taken at the church

Before the liturgy, picture-taking is not permitted in the main church or in the side chapel. During the liturgy, pictures should be few in number. They should also be taken without flash, and without any floodlights. After the liturgy, the time for pictures is contingent on available time and on other factors explained later in this wedding handbook.

2. BEFORE THE WEDDING STARTS

Proper Attire: Everyone attending the wedding, bridal party and guests, male and female alike, should observe the following dress code: all shoulders and knees should be covered. Please advise your guests about this policy as well. If the bridal party is not properly dressed for church, the priest will decide whether a Wedding Ceremony would be more appropriate than a Wedding Mass.

Proper Behavior: Because of problems that many churches have been encountering at weddings, it is necessary for us to remind everyone about the respectful and dignified behavior that is required in our sacred place of worship. The church must remain a place of reverent prayer before, during, and after the wedding liturgy.

While we welcome the presence of people who may not regularly attend church services, or who may not be members of our faith or of any faith, we still expect that their behavior will reflect that they are guests in our sacred place of worship.

These behavioral expectations will be clearly explained to the bridal party at the rehearsal. We will also notify them about the consequences for any unacceptable behavior in church. Please also advise your wedding guests of this policy.

Arrival at Church: The bridal party should arrive at least thirty (or more) minutes before the scheduled beginning of the wedding liturgy. The bride and the bridesmaids should enter by way of the lower parking lot and go directly to the church hall. Everyone else should enter by the main doors on the upper level. The groom and the groomsmen should wait in the priest's sacristy until the wedding liturgy is ready to begin.

Ushers: The guests should be seated as soon as possible after they arrive at church. Pews that are reserved for the parents and the bridal party are indicated by pew bows in the front of church. The ushers should arrive very early, and introduce themselves to the wedding coordinator for special instructions about their duties as ushers.

3. THE WEDDING PROCESSION

Rite of Welcome at the Doors. In the official ritual book for Catholic Weddings, the Rite of Welcome occurs at the church doors. When everyone has gathered at the church doors in the narthex, the priest welcomes them. The priest then leads everyone into church in this order: the bride and groom, the rest of the bridal party, their parents, relatives, and other guests.

Rite of Welcome at the Altar. The official ritual book for Catholic weddings also permits this Rite of Welcome to occur at the altar instead of at the church doors. In such a case, here are some options for the order of the wedding procession:

- The **groom** enters church first, either with his parents, or with the groomsmen.
- The **groomsmen** enter church, either with the groom, or with the bridesmaids.
- The **bridesmaids** enter church, either with the groomsmen, or by themselves.
- If there are **children**, they enter before the bride, either from the door or the back pew.
- The **bride** enters church last, either with both her parents, or just with her father.

All take their designated places in church for the celebration of the wedding liturgy, as follows:

- The bride and groom are at the kneelers in front of the altar steps.
- The parents and the bridal party members are in the first sets of pews.
- The relatives and guests are in the central pew sections off the main aisle.
- The priest welcomes everyone to the wedding from the altar, and then the liturgy begins.

Please work out all the details of the wedding procession the priest when planning the wedding liturgy. The focus of the sacred rites, however, is not on the procession, but on the liturgy itself.

4. THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Similar to a Sunday Mass, three Scripture readings are chosen for the Liturgy of the Word. If a Mass is being celebrated, then the Liturgy of the Word is preceded by the Penitential Rite as usual.

If there are trained Catholic Lectors available, or other people who are personally known to the priest, they may be invited by the priest to proclaim the first and the second readings. These Lectors may only proclaim the readings as given, and they may not add any additional remarks of their own.

A list of relevant Scripture Readings is contained in the next section of this parish wedding handbook.

5. THE RITE OF HOLY MATRIMONY

After the sermon, everyone in church stands as the best man and maid of honor join the bride and groom at the altar steps. The other members of the bridal party may also be invited to join them at the altar steps, but this is not necessary.

The bride and groom make their Statement of Intentions. They recite their Wedding Vows, and then they exchange their Wedding Rings.

At a Wedding Ceremony, the Nuptial Blessing is usually given to the bride and groom at this time. At a Wedding Mass, the Nuptial Blessing is usually given after the Lord's Prayer, before the bride and groom receive Holy Communion together.

The Vows, the Rings, and the Nuptial Blessing are the three essential elements for the celebration of the sacrament of Holy Matrimony in the Catholic Church. No secondary symbols may obscure the central importance of these three primary sacred symbols of the solemn Catholic wedding rite.

6. THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Matrimony is a complete sacrament in itself, and a wedding is fully celebrated at a liturgical ceremony without Communion. If the Wedding is to occur during the celebration of a Mass, however, there are several conditions. The bride and the groom are practicing Catholics, who go to Mass regularly, and have gone to Confession in preparation for their reception of Holy Communion. Also, there are enough other people present in church for the wedding, who know how to actively participate in the prayers and responses of the Mass.

On some occasions, the priest may invite Catholic family members to present the bread and wine at the Offertory for the celebration of the Eucharist.

The Sign of Peace consists of just a simple kiss between the bride and groom. With everyone remaining in their places, people just greet those who are standing right next to them in church.

The bride and groom usually receive Communion under both species at a Wedding Mass. Only practicing Catholics, who have properly prepared themselves through confession and fasting, may come forward to worthily receive the Eucharist.

7. CONCLUDING RITES

After the final prayer and blessing, the bride and groom lead a procession out of church into the narthex for a formal receiving line. Afterward, some pictures may be taken in the main part of church, if time and other circumstances permit.

If there are any optional rites, they are added at the end of the wedding liturgy. And, if there is an optional modest kiss at the end of the liturgy, it may be accompanied by polite applause only.

8. MUSIC SELECTIONS. Music at weddings must be religious in nature due to the sacredness of the liturgy and the church setting. General secular love songs are not considered appropriate for use in church. Our parish music staff has prepared the following list of approved religious music for weddings. You can listen to these music selections from the CD which accompanies this parish wedding handbook. Our parish staff provides quality religious music for all weddings at our parish, and they may not be replaced by outside musicians. However, qualified outside musicians may be allowed to work together with our parish musicians.

Processional Music

01. Bridal Chorus.....	Wagner
02. Prince of Denmark's March.....	Clarke
03. Canon in D.....	Pachelbel
04. Overture (Royal Fireworks).....	Handel
05. Bryllupsmarsj.....	Nystedt
06. Te Deum.....	Charpentier
07. Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring.....	Bach
08. Air (Water Music).....	Handel
09. Air for the G String.....	Bach
10. Trumpet Voluntary.....	Stanley

Responsorial Psalms

11. Psalm 128: Blest Are Those Who Love You.....	Haugen
12. Psalm 33: I Will Bless the Lord at All Times.....	Plantinga
13. Psalm 32: The Earth is Full of the Goodness of the Lord.....	Gelineau
14. Psalm 24: I Have Loved You.....	Joncas
15. Psalm 128: May the Lord Bless Us All the Days of Our Lives.....	Plantinga-Chant
16. Psalm 128: May the Lord Bless Us All the Days of Our Lives.....	Alstott-Chant
17. Psalm 34: Taste and See the Goodness of the Lord.....	Haugen
18. Psalm 34: Taste and See the Goodness of the Lord.....	Moore

Offertory and Communion Hymns (#19 is no longer available for use in our church)

20. Love Which Never Ends.....	Sands
21. And on This Day.....	English
22. Wherever You Go.....	Norbet
23. Wherever You Go.....	Haas
24. Where Love Is Found.....	Schutte
25. May God Bless You.....	Van Grieken
26. Lives Brought Together.....	Schutte
27. Panis Angelicus.....	Franck
28. One in Body, Heart, and Mind.....	Walker
29. As Grains of Wheat.....	Rosania
30. One Bread, One Body.....	Foley
31. Ave Maria.....	Gregorian Chant
32. Ave Maria.....	Norbet
33. Ave Maria.....	Schubert
34. On This Day, O Beautiful Mother.....	Lambilotte
35. Hail Mary, Gentle Woman.....	Landry

Recessional Music

36. Wedding March.....	Mendelssohn
37. The Rejoicing (Royal Fireworks).....	Handel
38. Rigaudon.....	Campra
39. Trumpet Tune.....	Purcell
40. Trumpet Tune in D.....	Johnson
41. Tuba Tune in D.....	Lang
42. Rondeau.....	Mouret
43. Psalm XIX.....	Marcello
44. Praise the Lord with Drums and Cymbals.....	Karg-Elert
45. With Trumpets and Horns (Water Music).....	Handel
46. Finale Jubilante.....	Willan
47. Marche Pontificale (Symphony No. 1).....	Widor

Please contact the parish music director regarding any religious or classical music that is not on this list.

Wedding Scripture Readings

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The Scripture readings, and the spiritual message of the homily that follows their proclamation, help us to prayerfully reflect on the deeper meaning of Christian love and the beauty of family life. These texts are for study purposes only, as the Scripture are proclaimed from the ritual book on the pulpit.

Old Testament Readings for Weddings

(Old Testament 1) Genesis 1:26-28, 31. God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground." God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth." God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good.

(Old Testament 2) Genesis 2:18-24. The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him." So the Lord God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man. So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called 'woman,' for out of 'her man' this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.

(Old Testament 3) Genesis 24:48-51, 58-67. The servant of Abraham said to Laban: "I bowed down in worship to the Lord, blessing the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to obtain the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. If, therefore, you have in mind to show true loyalty to my master, let me know; but if not, let me know that, too. I can then proceed accordingly." Laban and his household said in reply: "This thing comes from the Lord; we can say nothing to you either for or against it. Here is Rebekah, ready for you; take her with you, that she may become the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has said." So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Do you wish to go with this man?" She answered, "I do." At this they allowed their sister Rebekah and her nurse to take leave, along with Abraham's servant and his men. Invoking a blessing on Rebekah, they said: "Sister, may you grow into thousands of myriads; and may your descendants gain possession of the gates of their enemies!" Then Rebekah and her maids started out; they mounted their camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and went on his way. Meanwhile Isaac had gone from Beer-lahairoi and was living in the region the Negeb. One day toward evening he went out . . . in the field, and as he looked around, he noticed that camels were approaching. Rebekah, too, was looking about and when she saw him, she alighted from her camel and asked the servant, "Who is the man out here, walking through the fields toward us?" "That is my master," replied the servant. Then she covered herself with her veil. The servant recounted to Isaac all the things he had done. Then Isaac took Rebekah into his tent; he married her, and thus she became his wife. In his love for her Isaac found solace after the death of his mother Sarah.

(Old Testament 4) Tobit 7:9-10, 11-15. Tobiah said to Raphael, "Brother Azariah, ask Raguel to let me marry my kinswoman Sarah." Raguel overheard the words; so he said to the boy: "Eat and drink and be merry tonight, for no man is more entitled to marry my daughter Sarah than you, brother. Besides, not even I have the right to give her to anyone but you, because you are my closest relative. But I will explain the situation to you very frankly. She is yours according to the decree of the Book of Moses. Your marriage to her has been decided in heaven! Take your kinswoman; from now on you are her love, and she is your beloved. She is yours today and ever after. And tonight, son, may the Lord of heaven prosper you both. May he grant you mercy and peace." Then Raguel called his daughter Sarah, and she came to him. He took her by the hand and gave her to Tobiah with the words: "Take her according to the law. According to the decree written in the Book of Moses she is your wife. Take her and bring her back safely to your father. And may the God of heaven grant both of you peace and prosperity." He then called her mother and told her to bring a scroll, so that he might draw up a marriage contract stating that he gave Sarah to Tobiah as his wife according to the decree of the Mosaic law. Her mother brought the scroll, and he drew up the contract, to which they affixed their seals. Afterward they began to eat and drink.

(Old Testament 5) Tobit 8:5-7. On the wedding night Sarah got up, and she and Tobiah started to pray and beg that deliverance might be theirs. He began with these words: "Blessed are you, O God of our fathers; praised be your name forever and ever. Let the heavens and all your creation praise you forever. You made Adam and you gave him his wife Eve to be his help and support; and from these two the human race descended. You said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; let us make him a partner like himself.' Now, Lord, you know that I take this wife of mine not because of lust, but for a noble purpose. Call down your mercy on me and on her, and allow us to live together to a happy old age."

(Old Testament 6) Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16; 8:6-7. Hark! My lover! Here he comes springing across the mountains, leaping across the hills. My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag. Here he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattices. My lover speaks; he says to me, "Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come! "O my dove in the clefts of the rock, in the secret recesses of the cliff, let me see you, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and you are lovely." My lover belongs to me, and I to him. He said to me: Set me as a seal on your heart, as a seal on your arm; for stern as death is love, relentless as the nether world is devotion; its flames are a blazing fire. Deep waters cannot quench love, nor floods sweep it away.

(Old Testament 7) Sirach 26:1-4, 13-16. Happy the husband of a good wife, twice-lengthened are his days. A worthy wife brings joy to her husband, peaceful and full is his life. A good wife is a generous gift bestowed upon him who fears the Lord; be he rich or poor, his heart is content, and a smile is ever on his face. A gracious wife delights her husband, her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones; a gift from the Lord is her governed speech, and her firm virtue is of surpassing worth. Choicest of blessings is a modest wife, priceless her chaste person. Like the sun rising in the Lord's heavens, the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home.

(Old Testament 8) Jeremiah 31:31-32, 33-34. The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and kinsmen how to know the Lord. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the Lord.

New Testament Readings for Weddings

(New Testament 1) Romans 8:31-35, 37-39. If God is for us, who can be against us? Is it possible that he who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for the sake of us all will not grant us all things besides? Who shall bring a charge against God's chosen ones? God, who justifies? Who shall condemn them? Christ Jesus, who died or rather, was raised up, who is at the right hand of God and who intercedes for us? Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Trial, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword? Yet in all this we are more than conquerors because of him who has loved us. For I am certain that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, nor powers, neither height nor depth nor any other creature, will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

(New Testament 2) Romans 12:1-2, 9-18. Brothers, I beg you through the mercy of God to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may judge what is God's will, what is good, pleasing, and perfect. Your love must be sincere. Detest what is evil, cling to what is good. Love one another with the affection of brothers. Anticipate each other in showing respect. Do not grow slack but be fervent in spirit; he whom you serve is the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient under trial, persevere in prayer. Look on the needs of the saints as your own; be generous in offering hospitality. Bless your persecutors; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Have the same attitude toward all. Put away ambitious thoughts and associate with those who are lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. Never repay injury with injury. See that your conduct is honorable in the eyes of all. If possible, live peaceably with everyone.

(New Testament 3) I Corinthians 6:13-15, 17-20. The body is not for immorality; it is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. God, who raised up the Lord, will raise us also by his power. Do you not see that your bodies are members of Christ? But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun lewd conduct. Every other sin a man commits is outside his body, but the fornicator sins against his own body. You must know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is within — the Spirit you have received from God. You are not your own. You have been purchased, and at what a price! So glorify God in your body.

(New Testament 4) I Corinthians 12:31 – 13:8. Set your hearts on the greater gifts. I will show you the way which surpasses all the others. If I speak with human tongues and angelic as well, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong, a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and, with full knowledge, comprehend all mysteries, if I have faith great enough to move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give everything I have to feed the poor and hand over my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind. Love is not jealous, it does not put on airs, it is not snobbish. Love is never rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not prone to anger; neither does it brood over injuries. Love does not rejoice in what is wrong but rejoices with the truth. There is no limit to love's forbearance, to its trust, its hope, its power to endure. Love never fails.

(New Testament 5) Ephesians 5:2, 21-33. Follow the way of love, even as Christ loved you. He gave himself for us. Defer to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives should be submissive to their husbands as if to the Lord, because the husband is head of his wife, just as Christ is head of his body the Church, as well as its savior. As the Church submits to Christ, so wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church. He gave himself up for her to make her holy, purifying her in the bath of water by the power of the word, to present to himself a glorious Church, holy and immaculate, without stain or wrinkle or anything of that sort. Husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. Observe that no one ever hates his own flesh; no, he nourishes it and takes care of it as Christ cares for the Church – for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cling to his wife, and the two shall be made into one." This is a great foreshadowing; I mean that it refers to Christ and the Church. In any case, each one should love his wife as he loves himself, the wife for her part showing respect for her husband.

(New Testament 6) Colossians 3:12-17. Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt mercy, with kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievances you have against one another. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. Over all these virtues put on love, which binds the rest together and makes them perfect. Christ's peace must reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace. Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness. Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect, instruct and admonish one another. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns, and inspired songs. Whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through him.

(New Testament 7) I Peter 3:1-9. You married women must obey your husbands, so that any of them who do not believe in the word of the gospel may be won over apart from preaching, through their wives' conduct. They have only to observe the reverent purity of your way of life. The affectation of an elaborate hair dress, the wearing of golden jewelry or the donning of rich robes is not for you. Your adornment is rather the hidden character of the heart, expressed in the unfading beauty of a calm and gentle disposition. This is precious in God's eyes. The holy women of past ages used to adorn themselves in this way, reliant on God and obedient to their husbands – for example, Sarah, who was subject to Abraham and called him her master. You are her children when you do what is right and let no fears alarm you. You husbands, too, must show consideration for those who share your lives. Treat women with respect as the weaker sex, heirs just as much as you to the gracious gift of life. If you do so, nothing will keep your prayers from being answered. In summary, then, all of you should be like-minded, sympathetic, loving toward one another, kindly disposed, and humble. Do not return evil for evil or insult for insult. Return a blessing instead. This you have been called to do, that you may receive a blessing as your inheritance.

(New Testament 8) I John 3:18-24. Little children, let us love in deed and in truth, and not merely talk about it. This is our way of knowing we are committed to the truth and are at peace before him no matter what our consciences may charge us with; for God is greater than our hearts and all is known to him. Beloved, if our consciences have nothing to charge us with, we can be sure that God is with us and that we will receive at his hands whatever we ask. Why? Because we are keeping his commandments and doing what is pleasing in his sight. His commandment is this: we are to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and are to love one another as he commanded us. Those who keep his commandments remain in him and he in them. And this is how we know that he remains in us: from the Spirit that he gave us.

(New Testament 9) I John 4:7-12. Beloved, let us love one another because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten of God and has knowledge of God. The man without love has known nothing of God, for God is love. God's love was revealed in our midst in this way: He sent his only Son to the world that we might have life through him. Love, then, consists in this: not that we have loved God, but that he has loved us and has sent his Son as an offering for our sins. Beloved, if God has loved us so, we must have the same love for one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet if we love one another God dwells in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us.

(New Testament 10) Revelation 19:1, 5-9. I, John, heard what sounded like the loud song of a great assembly in heaven. They were singing: "Alleluia! Salvation, glory, and might belong to our God." A voice coming from the throne cried out: "Praise our God, all you his servants, the small and the great, who revere him!" Then I heard what sounded like the shouts of a great crowd, or the roaring of the deep, or mighty peals of thunder, as they cried: "Alleluia! The Lord is king, our God, the Almighty! Let us rejoice and be glad, and give him glory! For this is the wedding day of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself for the wedding. She has been given a dress to wear made of finest linen, brilliant white." The linen dress is the virtuous deeds of God's saints. The angel then said to me: "Write this down: Happy are they who have been invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb."

Gospel Readings for Weddings

(Gospel Reading 1) Matthew 5:1-12. When Jesus saw the crowds he went up on the mountainside. After he had sat down his disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them: "How blest are the poor in spirit, the reign of God is theirs. Blest too are the sorrowing, they shall be consoled. Blest are the lowly, they shall inherit the land. Blest are they who hunger and thirst for holiness, they shall have their fill. Blest are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs. Blest are the single-hearted, for they shall see God. Blest too the peacemakers, they shall be called sons of God. Blest are those persecuted for holiness' sake, the reign of God is theirs. Blest are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of slander against you because of me. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward in heaven is great."

(Gospel Reading 2) Matthew 5:13-16. Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth. But what if salt goes flat? How can you restore its flavor? Then it is good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Men do not light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket. They set it on a stand where it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, your light must shine before men so that they may see goodness in your acts and give praise to your heavenly Father."

(Gospel Reading 3) Matthew 7:21, 24-29. Jesus said to his disciples: "None of those who cry out, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of God but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. Anyone who hears my words and puts them into practice is like the wise man who built his house on rock. When the rainy season set in, the torrents came and the winds blew and buffeted his house. It did not collapse; it had been solidly set on rock. Anyone who hears my words but does not put them into practice is like the foolish man who built his house on sandy ground. The rains fell, the torrents came, the winds blew and lashed against his house. It collapsed under all this and was completely ruined." Jesus finished this discourse and left the crowds spellbound at his teaching. The reason was that he taught with authority and not like the scribes.

(Gospel Reading 4) Matthew 19:3-6. Some Pharisees came up to Jesus and said, to test him, "May a man divorce his wife for any reason whatever?" He replied, "Have you not read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female and declared, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and the two shall become as one'? Thus they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, let no man separate what God has joined."

(Gospel Reading 5) Matthew 22:35-40. One of the Pharisees, a lawyer, in an attempt to trip up Jesus, asked Him, "Teacher, which commandment of the law is the greatest?" Jesus said to him: "'You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments the whole law is based, and the prophets as well."

(Gospel Reading 6) Mark 10:6-9. Jesus said: "At the beginning of creation God made them male and female; for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and the two shall become as one. They are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore let no man separate what God has joined."

(Gospel Reading 7) John 2:1-11. There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had likewise been invited to the celebration. At a certain point the wine ran out, and Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine." Jesus replied, "Woman, how does this concern of yours involve me? My hour has not yet come." His mother instructed those waiting on table, "Do whatever he tells you." As prescribed for Jewish ceremonial washings, there were at hand six stone water jars, each one holding fifteen to twenty-five gallons. "Fill those jars with water," Jesus ordered, at which they filled them to the brim. "Now," he said, "draw some out and take it to the waiter in charge." They did as he instructed them.

The waiter in charge tasted the water made wine, without knowing where it had come from; only the waiters knew since they had drawn the water. Then the waiter in charge called the groom over and remarked to him: "People usually serve the choice wine first; then, when the guests have been drinking a while, a lesser vintage. What you have done is keep the choice wine until now." Jesus performed this first of his signs at Cana in Galilee. Thus did he reveal his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

(Gospel Reading 8) John 15:9-12. Jesus said to his disciples: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Live on in my love. You will live in my love if you keep my commandments, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and live in his love. All this I tell you that my joy may be yours and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you."

(Gospel Reading 9) John 15:12-16. Jesus said to his disciples: "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer speak of you as slaves, for a slave does not know what his master is about. Instead, I call you friends, since I have made known to you all that I heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, it was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit. Your fruit must endure, so that all you ask the Father in my name he will give you."

(Gospel Reading 10) John 17:20-26. Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed: "Holy Father, I do not pray for my disciples alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word, that all may be one as you, Father, are in me, and I in you; I pray that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. I have given them the glory you gave me that they may be one, as we are one — I living in them, you living in me — that their unity may be complete. So shall the world know that you sent me, and that you loved them as you loved me. Father, all those you gave me I would have in my company where I am, to see this glory of mine which is your gift to me, because of the love you bore me before the world began. Just Father, the world has not known you, but I have known you; and these men have known that you sent me. To them I have revealed your name, and I will continue to reveal it so that your love for me may live in them, and I may live in them."



Wedding Vows and Blessings

St. Mary Catholic Church – 708-326-9300 – www.StMaryMokena.com
19515 South 115th Avenue, Post Office Box 2, Mokena, Illinois 60448-0002

*The central focus of the sacramental wedding liturgy is on three sacred actions:
the exchange of the Vows, the exchange of the Rings, and the bestowal of the Nuptial Blessing.
Please select one form of the marriage Vows, and one form of the Nuptial Blessing, as found below.*

Statement of Intentions *(Similar words are used when either the bride or groom is not baptized.)*

My dear friends, you have come together in this church
so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love
in the presence of the Church's minister and this community.
Christ abundantly blesses this love. [He has already consecrated you in baptism
and now he enriches and strengthens you by a special sacrament]
so that you may assume the duties of marriage in mutual and lasting fidelity.
And so, in the presence of the Church, I ask you to state your intentions.

_____ and _____, have you come here freely and without reservation
to give yourselves to each other in marriage? — “We have.”

Will you love and honor each other
as man and wife for the rest of your lives? — “We will.”

Will you accept children lovingly from God,
and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church? — “We will.”

Exchange of Vows: *Please choose option A or option B for the wedding vows.*

Since it is your intention to enter into marriage,
join your [right] hands, and declare your consent before God and his Church.

(A) I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband.
I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health.
I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

(B) I, _____, take you, _____, for my lawful wife/husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward,
for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.

You have declared your consent before the Church. May the Lord in his goodness strengthen your consent
and fill you both with his blessings. What God has joined, men must not divide. Amen.

Exchange of Rings *(Similar words are used when one party is not baptized.)*

_____, take 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.

Solemn Nuptial Blessing: Option A – for a Mass when both the bride and the groom are baptized

My dear friends, let us turn to the Lord and pray that he will bless with his grace this woman now married in Christ to this man, and that [through the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ] he will unite in love the couple he has joined in this holy bond.

Father, by your power you have made everything out of nothing. In the beginning you created the universe and made mankind in your own likeness. You gave man the constant help of woman so that man and woman should no longer be two, but one flesh, and you teach us that what you have united may never be divided.

Father, you have made the union of man and wife so holy a mystery that it symbolizes the marriage of Christ and his Church. Father, by your plan man and woman are united, and married life has been established as the one blessing that was not forfeited by original sin or washed away in the flood.

Look with love upon this woman, your daughter, now joined to her husband in marriage. She asks your blessing. Give her the grace of love and peace. May she always follow the example of the holy women whose praises are sung in the Scriptures. May her husband put his trust in her and recognize that she is his equal and the heir with him to the life of grace. May he always honor her and love her as Christ loves his bride, the Church.

Father, keep them always true to your commandments. Keep them faithful in marriage and let them be living examples of Christian life. Give them the strength which comes from the gospel so that they may be witnesses of Christ to others. Bless them with children and help them to be good parents. May they live to see their children's children. And, after a happy old age, grant them fullness of life with the saints in the kingdom of heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Solemn Nuptial Blessing: Option B – for a Mass when both the bride and the groom are baptized

Let us pray to the Lord for N. and N., who come to God's altar at the beginning of their married life, so that they may always be united in love for each other [as they share in the Body and Blood of Christ].

Holy Father, you created mankind in your own image and made man and woman to be joined as husband and wife in a union of body and heart and so fulfill their mission in this world.

Father, to reveal the plan of your love, you made the union of husband and wife an image of the covenant between you and your people. In the fulfillment of this sacrament, the marriage of Christian man and woman is a sign of the marriage between Christ and the Church.

Father, stretch out your hand, and bless N. and N. Lord, grant that as they begin to live this sacrament they may share with each other the gifts of your love and become one in heart and mind as witnesses to your presence in their marriage. Help them to create a home together and give them children to be formed by the gospel and to have a place in your family.

Give your blessing to N., your daughter, so that she may be a good wife and mother, caring for the home, faithful in love for her husband, generous and kind. Give your blessings to N., your son, so that he may be a faithful husband and a good father.

Father, grant that as they come together to your table on earth, so they may one day have the joy of sharing your feast in heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Nuptial Blessing: Option C – for a Ceremony when both the bride and the groom are baptized

My dear friends, let us ask God for his continued blessings upon this bridegroom and his bride.

Holy Father, creator of the universe, maker of man and woman in your own likeness, source of blessing for married life, we humbly pray to you for this woman who today is united with her husband in this sacrament of marriage. May your fullest blessing come upon her and her husband so that they may together rejoice in your gift of married love and enrich your Church with their children.

Lord, may they both praise you when they are happy and turn to you in their sorrows. May they be glad that you help them in their work and know that you are with them in their need. May they pray to you in the community of the Church, and be your witnesses in the world. May they reach old age in the company of their friends, and come at last to the kingdom of heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Nuptial Blessing: Option D – for a Ceremony when either the bride or the groom is *not* baptized

My dear friends, let us ask God for his continued blessings upon this bridegroom and his bride.

Holy Father, creator of the universe, maker of man and woman in your own likeness, source of blessing for married life, we humbly pray to you for this woman who today is united with her husband in the bond of marriage. May your fullest blessing come upon her and her husband so that they may together rejoice in your gift of married love. May they be noted for their good lives and be parents filled with virtue.

Lord, may they both praise you when they are happy and turn to you in their sorrows. May they be glad that you help them in their work and know that you are with them in their need. May they reach old age in the company of their friends, and come at last to the kingdom of heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sample Prayers of the Faithful – for optional for use at a Wedding Mass

For _____ and _____, who are now joined in the sacrament of marriage. May their love for each other reflect the mystical union of Christ and his Church. We pray to the Lord.

For the family and friends of _____ and _____, especially those who are here with us today. May they continue to support this couple on the sacred journey that has begun before this altar. We pray to the Lord.

For married people everywhere, who have pledged themselves to each other before God. May they live in mutual love, and in enduring faithfulness, all the days of their lives. We pray to the Lord.

For greater respect and love among all family members, young and old, parent and sibling. May nothing ever come between them, but may they always grow in love of God and each other. We pray to the Lord.

For all our own special intentions, which we mention in silence. We pray to the Lord.