



Celebrating Matrimony

Celebrating Matrimony Without Mass – Worship Aid Guidelines

“For God, who has called the couple to Marriage, continues to call them to Marriage. Those who marry in Christ are able, with faith in the Word of God, to celebrate fruitfully the mystery of the union of Christ and the Church, to live it rightly, and to bear witness to it publicly before all.

A Marriage that is desired, prepared for, celebrated, and lived daily in the light of faith is that which is ‘joined by the Church, strengthened by a sacrificial offering, sealed by a blessing, announced by Angels, and ratified by the Father...How wonderful the bond of the two believers: one in hope, one in vow, one in discipline, one in the same service! They are both children of one Father and servants of the same Master, with no separation of spirit and flesh. Indeed, they are two in one flesh; where there is one flesh, there is also one spirit.’”

Order of Celebrating Matrimony, #11.

The wedding liturgy is a communal celebration, and participation of the congregation is encouraged. A printed worship aid may facilitate better participation and a sense of welcome. The design of the worship aid may take any format. Printed covers are commercially available at stores that sell religious goods, wedding supplies, or paper products (such as Henninger’s, Pat Catan’s, or FedEx/Kinko’s), or the cover may be custom designed. Paper stock and layout are also at the discretion of the designer, and may be selected to coordinate with the bridal party dresses, flowers, or themes. Following are suggestions of what content to include in the wedding worship aid.

The front of the program typically includes the names of the bride and groom, date, and location:

Celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony Uniting

Jane A. Doe

and

John B. Smith

July x, 20xx

St. Monica Church

Usually the names of those who have significant roles in the wedding celebration are listed, either at the front of the program or at the back. This can include bridal party, parents of the couple, presider, reader(s), gift bearer(s), music minister(s), and/or greeter(s). The body of the worship aid details the order of worship:



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Processional and Entrance Chant (include song title)

Greeting

Collect (Opening Prayer)

First Reading (may include scripture citation, one-line summary of the reading, and/or
“proclaimed by *reader’s name*”)

Responsorial Psalm (sung; please include the words in the worship aid so that the assembly can
respond)

Second Reading (may include scripture citation, one-line summary of the reading, and/or
“proclaimed by *reader’s name*”)

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel (may include scripture citation and/or one-line summary of the reading)

Homily

Celebration of Matrimony

 Questions before the Consent

 Consent

 Reception of Consent

 Acclamation

 Blessing and Giving of Rings

 Acclamation

Universal Prayer

Our Father

Nuptial Blessing

Final Blessing

Recessional (list song title)

Some couples choose to include a prayer, thank-you, or forwarding address at the end of the program, as space permits.

Note that some couples choose to have greeters, separate from their bridal party, to hand out the worship aids at the door. This can be a gesture of hospitality (providing visiting guests an opportunity to become acclimated with the church, and also someone, for example, to ask for directions to the rest room). It is also an opportunity to give a special role to a significant young person in the couples’ life without having them as part of the bridal party. This is optional, and some couples choose to simply have the bridal party members who seat guests serve as greeters.

If you have any questions about this guide, or what to include in your worship aid, please contact Mary Hrich at music@smmwillowick.org or 440-854-6015.