

**S**olemn **R**ite of **B**etrothal  
and  
**P**ublishing of the **B**anns

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# Solemn Rite of Betrothal

There is no prescribed ritual for betrothal. However, it is most fitting that the ceremony take place before the altar of God and that it be followed by the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, together with the reception of Holy Communion. The following prayers and ceremonies are suggested.

1. The priest (vested in surplice and white stole) with his assistants (vested in surplice) awaits the couple at the Altar. At hand are the stoup with holy water and the altar Missal. As the man and woman come forward with the two witnesses they have chosen, the following antiphon and psalm are sung on the eighth psalm tone.

**Antiphon:** To the Lord I will tender my PROM-ise: \* in the presence of ALL His PEO-ple.

## Psalm cxxvi

**U**NLESS the house be of the Lord's  
BUILD-ing, \* in vain do the BUILD-ers  
LA-bor.

**U**nless the Lord be the guard of the CI-ty, \* tis  
in vain the guard KEEPS his SE-ntry.

**I**t is futile that you rise before DAY-break, \*  
to be astir in the MIDST of DARK-ness,

**Y**ou that eat the bread of hard LA-bor; \* for  
He deals bountifully to His beloved while  
THEY are SLEEP-ing.

**B**ehold, offspring result from God's GIV-ing,  
\* a fruitful womb the regard OF His BLESS-  
ing.

**L**ike arrows in the hand of the WAR-rior, \*  
are children begotten of a YOUTH-ful FA-  
ther.

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Happy the man who has filled therewith his  
QUIV-er; \* they shall uphold him in  
contending at the gate WITH his RI-val

Glory be to the Father and TO the Son,\* and  
to the HO-ly Gho-st.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and for-  
EV-er,\* through endless A-ges. A-men.

**Antiphon:** To the Lord I will tender my PROM-ise:\* in the presence  
of ALL His PEO-ple.

2. The priest now addresses them:

### ALLOCUTION

**B**ELOVED of Christ: It is the dispensation of Divine Providence  
that you are called to the holy vocation of marriage. For this reason  
you present yourselves today before Christ and His Church, before  
His sacred minister and the devout people of God, to ratify in solemn  
manner the engagement bespoken between you.

At the same time you entreat the blessing of the Church upon your  
proposal, as well as the earnest supplications of the faithful here  
present, since you fully realize that what has been inspired and guided  
by the will of your heavenly Father requires equally His grace to be  
brought to a happy fulfilment. We are confident that you have given  
serious and prayerful deliberation to your pledge of wedlock;  
moreover, that you have sought counsel from the superiors whom God  
has placed over you. In the time that intervenes, you will prepare for  
the sacrament of matrimony by a period of virtuous courtship, so that  
when the happy and blessed day arrives for you to give yourselves  
irrevocably to each other, you will have laid a sound spiritual  
foundation for long years of godly prosperity on earth and eventual  
blessedness together in the life to come. May the union you purpose  
one day to consummate as man and wife be found worthy to be in all  
truth a sacramental image and reality of the union of Christ and His

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beloved Bride, the Church. This grant, Thou Who livest and reignest, God, world without end. *R̄*. Amen.

3. The priest now bids the couple to join their right hands the while they repeat after him the following:

The man:

**I**N the name of our Lord, I, *N.N.*, promise that I will one day take thee, *N.N.*, as my wife, according to the ordinances of God and holy Church. I will love thee even as myself. I will keep faith and loyalty to thee, and so in thy necessities aid and comfort thee; which things and all that man ought to do unto his espoused I promise to do unto thee and to keep by the faith that is in me.

The woman:

**I**N the name of our Lord, I, *N.N.*, do declare that, in the form and manner wherein thou hast promised thyself unto me, do declare and affirm that I will one day bind and oblige myself unto thee, and will take thee, *N.N.*, as my husband. And all that thou hast pledged.

4. Then the priest takes the two ends of his stole and in the form of a cross places them over the clasped hands of the couple. Holding the stole in place with his left hand, he says:

**I** bear witness to thy solemn proposal and I declare thee betrothed. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, *✠* and of the Holy Ghost. *R̄*. Amen.

As he pronounces the last words he sprinkles them with holy water in the form of a cross.

5. Thereupon he blesses the engagement ring:

*V̄*. Adjutórium nostrum in nómine *V̄*. Our help is in the name of the Dómini. Lord.

*R̄*. Qui fecit cælum et terram. *R̄*. Who made heaven and earth.

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☩. Dóminus vobíscum.

℟. Et cum spírítu tuo.

☩. The Lord be with you.

℟. And with thy spirit.

**O**MNÍPOTENS Deus, creátor et conservátor humáni géneris, ac largítor ætérnæ salútis, permítte dignéris Spírítum Sanctum Paráclitum super hunc ánnulum. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum: Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spírítus Sancti Deus, per ómnia sácula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

**O** GOD Almighty, Creator and preserver of the human race, and the Giver of everlasting salvation, deign to allow the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete to come with His blessing upon this ring. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, for ever and ever. ℟. Amen.

6. The man takes the ring and places it first on the index finger of the left hand of the woman saying: **In the name of the Father, then on the middle finger, adding: and of the Son, finally placing and leaving it on the ring finger he concludes: and of the Holy Ghost.**

7. The priest opens the missal at the beginning of the Canon, and presents the page imprinted with the crucifixion to be kissed, first by the man and then by the woman.

8. If Mass does not follow (or even if Mass is to follow, if he deems it opportune), the priest may read the following passages from Sacred Scripture:

### **Tobias 7 :8**

**T**OBIAS said: I will not eat nor drink here this day, unless thou first grant me my petition, and promise to give me Sara thy daughter....The angel said to him: Be not afraid to give her to this man, for to him who feareth God is thy daughter due to be his wife; therefore another could not have her....And Raguel taking the right hand of his daughter, he gave it into the right hand of Tobias, saying: The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob be with you, and may he

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join you together, and fulfil his blessing in you.

And taking paper they made a writing of the marriage. And afterwards they made merry, blessing God.... Then Tobias exhorted the virgin, and said to her: Sara, arise, and let us pray to God to day, and to morrow, and the next day: because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock.

For we are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God. So they both arose, and prayed earnestly both together that health might be given them.

℟. Thanks be to God.

### **John 15:4-12**

**A**T that time Jesus said to His disciples: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing.

If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you. In this is my Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit, and become my disciples. As the Father hath love me, I also have loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; as I also have kept my Father's commandments, and do abide in His love.

These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled. This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you.

℟. Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

**9. Lastly the priest extends his hands over the heads of the couple, and says:**

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**M**AY God bless thy bodies and thy souls. May He shed His blessing on thee as He blessed Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. May the hand of the Lord be upon thee. May He send His holy Angel to guard thee all the days of thy life. Amen. Go in peace!

10. Before leaving the church, the betrothed couple as well as the witnesses will affix their signatures to the document previously prepared for this purpose. A form for the document is herewith given.

**Document**

**I**N the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Before Almighty God, before Holy Church and her faithful here assembled, we, the undersigned, have this day promised the eventual consecration of one to the other in the sacrament of matrimony, which is none other than the mystery of that great Sacrament—Christ and His beloved Spouse, the Church. May the divine Spirit with His grace and manifold gifts enlighten our minds and move our wills to spend the days of our engagement soberly, piously, and justly, awaiting the blessed consummation of that union to which we have been called and to which we are solemnly pledged. In Thee, O Lord, do we put our trust.

Let us nevermore be confounded.

.....&.....  
Date.....  
Church of.....  
Priest:.....  
Witnesses.....&.....

11. If Mass does not follow immediately, it would be appropriate to sing at this time the seasonal anthem of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

## Publishing of the Banns\*

**B**EFORE a marriage is contracted the banns of matrimony must be published by the pastor of each party concerned. The banns are to be published on three successive Sundays or other feasts of precept, in and during the parochial Mass or other sacred functions at which there is a large attendance of the faithful. However, the Ordinary may substitute in place of the usual banns a public notice affixed to the door of the parochial or another church. This notice will give the names of the contracting parties, and is to remain there for a period of at least eight days, including two on which the people are obliged to assist at Mass.

If the man and woman belong to different parishes, the banns must be published in each parish church.

The banns should be published in the following way. During the parochial Mass or at some other sacred function, as explained above, the parish priest makes the announcement to the people, using the vernacular form:

**B**E it known to all here present that **N.**, son of **N.**, of the parish of **N.**, and **N.**, daughter of **N.**, of the parish of **N.**, intend to be united in holy matrimony. Wherefore, we hereby admonish each and all that, if anyone of you has knowledge of an impediment existing which would prevent their marrying, whether it be an impediment of blood relationship, relationship through marriage, spiritual relationship, or of any other kind, you are bound to make it known to the pastor or the bishop so soon as possible. This is the first (or second, or third) publication of the banns.

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\* Rubrics excerpted from the *Rituale Romanum* tit. vii. Cap. i. *De Sac. Matrimonii*, rubs. 6-12.

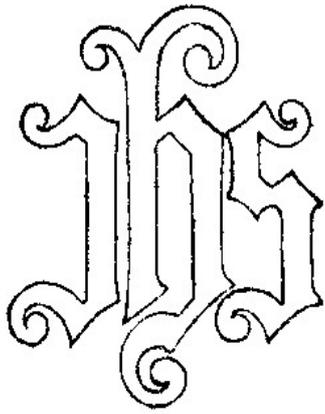
## PUBLISHING OF THE BANNS

The proper local Ordinary of the parties concerned at his discretion may dispense from the publication of the banns for a legitimate reason, even if they were to have been published in another diocese. If there is more than one bishop considered as “Ordinary,” dispensation from banns must be granted by the one in whose diocese the marriage will take place, but if the marriage is to take place outside of the regular diocese, anyone of the proper Ordinaries can grant the dispensation.

If some other pastor has tended to the inquiry about the freedom to marry or to the publication of banns, he must at once send an authentic notice of the results to the pastor who is supposed to assist at the marriage.

Even after the investigation as to the status of freedom has been made and the banns published, the pastor should not assist at marriage until he has received all necessary documents. Nor should he do so before three days have elapsed since the final banns, unless a sufficient reason prompts otherwise. If the marriage does not take place within six months after the publication of banns, the latter must be repeated, unless the Ordinary deems otherwise.

Provided no impediment, whether doubtful or certain, has been discovered, the pastor is to admit the parties to the solemnization of marriage following the proclamation of banns.



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