

THE SACREMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY

THE PRIEST STANDS BEFORE THE TETRAPOD NEAR THE SANCTUARY. ON THE TETRAPOD ARE PLACED THE HOLY GOSPEL, THE CROSS, TWO CANDLESTICKS, TWO CROWNS AND GLASS OF WINE

1- The Betrothal Ceremony

ACCORDING TO THE PRESENT CUSTOM, THE BRIDAL PARTY IS RECEIVED BY THE PRIEST AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE CHURCH. THEN THEY MAKE A PROCESSION INTO THE CHURCH WHILE THE PRIEST IS INCENSING, AND THE CHOIR CHANTS THE HIRMOS OF PENTECOST IN THE 4TH TONE

Choir: Hail, O Lady, glorious in your maiden-motherhood: For every skilful, fluent tongue is powerless in eloquence to sing your praises worthily, every mind is bewildered, trying to perceive your birthgiving. Wherefore with one accord we glorify you

THE PRIEST STANDS BEFORE THE ROYAL DOORS, AND THE BRIDAL COUPLE APPROACH WITH THE TWO WITNESSES, THE BRIDEGROOM ON THE RIGHT AND THE BRIDE ON THE LEFT, AND ON EACH SIDE OF THEM THE BEST MAN, AND THE MAID OF HONOR, ALL HOLDING LIGHTED CANDLES. THE PRIEST THEN PLACES THE TWO RINGS ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE TABLE, AND BEGINS THE SERVICE THUS:

Priest: Blessed is our God, at all times, now and always and forever and ever.

Choir: Amen

THE PRIEST PRAYS THE PRAYER OF BETROTHAL, SAYING:

Priest: O Lord our God, who from among the nations betrothed the Church to yourself as a pure virgin, bless † this betrothal, and unite and watch over these your servants in peace and harmony. For all glory, honour and worship are your due, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

Choir: Amen

THE PRIEST TAKES THE TWO RINGS. FIRST, HE PLACES THE RING ON THE GROOM'S HAND, THEN THE BRIDE'S RING ON HER HAND. HE BLESSES THE GROOM, SAYING:

Priest: The servant of God (**Groom**) is betrothed to the servant of God (**Bride**), † in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Choir: Amen

THEN HE CHANGES THE RINGS, PLACING ON THE BRIDE'S HAND THE GROOM'S RING, AND ON THE GROOM'S HAND THE BRIDE'S RING. HE BLESSES THE BRIDE ,SAYING:

Priest: The servant of God (**Bride**) is betrothed to the servant of God (**Groom**), †
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

Choir: Amen

THEN THE PRIEST RETURNS THE RINGS TO THEIR ORIGINAL POSITION. HE BLESSES THE GROOM AND BRIDE, SAYING TO THE GROOM:

Priest: The servant of God (**Groom**) is betrothed to the servant of God (**Bride**), †
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

Choir: Amen

2- THE CROWNING CEREMONY

THE PRIEST COMMENCES THE VERSES FROM PSALM 127. AFTER EACH VERSE, THE CHOIR REPEATS THE REFRAIN:

Choir: Glory be to You, O our God, glory to You

Priest: * Blessed are all who fear the Lord, and walk In his ways.

* Of the labour of your hands you shall eat: Blessed are you, and it shall be well with you.

* Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your house. Your children like olive shoots around your table.

* So in this way shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord.

THE PRIEST HERE BEGINS THE EXCHANGE OF CONSENT:

Priest: (**NAME OF THE GROOM**) do you freely and willingly come to take the servant of God (**NAME OF THE BRIDE**) here present, for your lawful wife, according to the rite of the Holy Catholic Church?

Groom: I do

Priest: (NAME OF THE BRIDE), do you freely and willingly come to take the servant of God (NAME OF THE GROOM) here present, for your lawful husband, according to the rite of the Holy Catholic Church?

Bride: I do

THE PRIEST MAKES THE SIGN OF THE CROSS WITH THE GOSPEL BOOK AS IN THE BEGINNING OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

Priest: Blessed is the kingdom of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever

Choir: Amen

Priest: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy (*THE CHOIR RESPONDS LIKEWISE AFTER EACH PETITION*)

Priest: For peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

* For peace in the whole world, for the wellbeing of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

* For this holy house and for those who enter it with faith, reverence and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

* For our Archbishop (*Name*), the reverend priests, the deacons in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

* For the servants of God, (NAME OF THE BRIDE/GROOM), who are now being joined together in the communion of marriage, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

* That this marriage may be blessed like the marriage at Cana in Galilee, let us pray to the Lord.

* That they may be given the purity and procreation in ways that are best for them, That they may rejoice at the sight of their sons and daughters, That

they may be given the joy of fine children and a blameless unfolding of their life, let us pray to the Lord.

* That every prayer for salvation may be granted to them and to us all, let us pray to the Lord.

* That they and we too may be delivered from all affliction, wrath, danger and need, let us pray to the Lord.

* Help us, save us, have mercy on us and keep us, O God, by your grace.

* Calling to mind our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Mother of God and ever - virgin Mary, together with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

Choir: To you, O Lord.

Priest: For to you all glory, honour and worship are due, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever

Choir: Amen

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord

Choir: Lord, have mercy

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord our God, celebrant of mystical and pure marriage, maker of the laws of the body, guardian of immortality, kind planner of the ways of living. Now, O Master, who in the beginning created man, and appointed him as king of creation, and said: "It is not good for man to be alone on earth. Let us create a helpmate for him", and then, taking one of his ribs, created woman, whom when Adam saw he said: "This now is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She will be called woman for she was taken out of man." " For this reason a man leaves his father and mother and binds himself to his wife, and the two will become one flesh" and "whom God has joined together, let no man separate"; so now, Master, Lord our God, send down your heavenly grace upon these servants of yours, N and N, and grant that this woman may in all things be subject to her husband and that this servant of yours may be the head of his wife, so that they may live according to your will

† Bless them, Lord our God, as you blessed Abraham and Sarah

Choir: Amen

† Bless them, Lord our God, as you blessed Joachim and Anne

Choir: Amen

† Bless them, Lord our God, as you blessed Zachariah and Elizabeth

Choir: Amen

Be mindful of them, Lord our God, as you were mindful of your forty holy martyrs, sending down upon them heavenly crowns **(Amen)**

Be mindful, too, Lord our God, of the parents who brought them up, for the prayers of parents strengthen the foundations of homes **(Amen)**

Be mindful, Lord our God, of your servants, the witnesses, who take part in this joy **(Amen)**

Be mindful, Lord our God, of your servant (Name), and your servant (Name), and bless them. Give them the gift of procreation, fine children, and unity of mind and body. Raise them up like the cedars of Lebanon, like well-tended vines. Give them a productive outcome, so that, having everything they need, they may achieve everything well-pleasing to you. And let them see their childrens children as newly-planted olive trees around their table. And, pleasing you greatly, may they shine like stars in the heavens, our Lord, to whom is due all glory, dominion, honour and worship, and to your eternal Father, and your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

Choir: Amen

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord

Choir: Lord, have mercy

Priest: O holy God, who moulded man out of dust, and from his rib formed woman and joined her to him as a helpmate, for so it pleased your majesty that man be not alone on earth. And now, Master, stretch out your hand from your holy dwelling place and join together your servant **(Groom)** and your servant **(Bride)**, *(here they join hands, the groom's left to the bride's right)* for it is by you that a wife is joined to her husband. Unite them in oneness of mind and join them into one flesh. Grace them with the gift of procreation, the joy of fine children

For yours is the dominion, and yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

Choir: Amen

TAKING THE CROWNS, THE PRIEST FIRST CROWNS THE GROOM THEN THE BRIDE. HE MAKES THE SIGN OF THE CROSS OVER THEIR HEADS, SAYING:

Priest: The servant of God (NAME OF THE GROOM) is crowned for the servant of God (NAME OF THE BRIDE), † in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Choir: Amen

HE PLACES THE GROOM'S CROWN ON THE HEAD OF THE BRIDE, AND, THE BRIDE'S CROWN ON THE HEAD OF THE GROOM, BLESSING THEM WITH THE SIGN OF THE CROSS, SAYING:

Priest: The servant of God (NAME OF THE BRIDE) is crowned for the servant of God (NAME OF THE GROOM), † in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

Choir: Amen.

THE PRIEST THEN RETURNS THE CROWNS TO THEIR ORIGINAL POSITION, BLESSING THEM WITH THE SIGN OF THE CROSS, SAYING:

Priest: The servant of God (NAME OF THE GROOM), is crowned for the servant of God (NAME OF THE BRIDE) † in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Choir: Amen

THE FOLLOWING HYMN IN THE SEVENTH TONE IS CHANTED THREE TIMES BY THE PRIEST AND THE PEOPLE:

O Lord, our God, crown them with glory and honor, and grant them dominion over the works of your hands.

Priest: Let us be attentive

Reader: You have set upon their heads crowns of precious stones

They asked life of you, and you gave it to them, to last for all the days

Priest: Wisdom.

Reader: A reading from the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Ephesians (Ephesians 5: 20-33)

Priest: Let us be attentive

Reader: Brethren: Give thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the Church, the body of which he is the saviour. Just as the Church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her

with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the Church to himself in splendour, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind - yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish.

In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the Church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the Church. Each one of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

Priest: † Peace to you, reader

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Priest: Wisdom. Let us stand and listen to the Holy Gospel. Peace † be to all

Choir: And to your spirit

Priest: The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the Evangelist
(Jn 2: 1-11)

Choir: Glory to you, O Lord, glory be to you

Priest: Let us be attentive

At that time there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When then steward tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Choir: Glory to you, O Lord, glory be to you.

Priest: And count us worthy, Master, to dare with confidence and without condemnation to call upon you, God of heaven, as Father, and to say:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

Priest: For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever

Choir: Amen

Priest: Peace † be to all

Choir: And to your spirit

Priest: Let us bow our heads to the Lord

Choir: To you, O Lord

THE PRIEST BLESSES THE CUP OF WINE WITH THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

Priest: O God, who create all things by your might, and make the whole world firm, and beautify the crown of everything you have created, bless † also with spiritual blessing this common cup presented to those now joined in the communion of marriage. For blessed is your name and glorified is your kingdom, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever

Choir: Amen

THE PRIEST PRESENTS THE CUP OF WINE TO THE GROOM AND TO THE BRIDE AND THEN TO THE WITNESSES WHILE THE CHOIR SINGS THE KINONIKON:

Choir: I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord

THE PRIEST THEN LEADS THEM AROUND THE TABLE THREE TIMES IN PROCESSION, WHILE THE CHOIR SINGS THE FOLLOWING HYMNS ON THE FIFTH TONE:

Choir: O Isaiah, rejoice, for the Virgin has conceived in her womb and has given birth to a Son, Immanuel, both God and man. His name is Orient. Magnifying him, we call the Virgin blessed

AND ON THE SEVENTH TONE:

O holy Martyrs, who have fought the good fight and have received your crowns, implore the Lord that he may have mercy on our souls

Glory to you, O Christ God, the Apostles' proud acclaim, the Martyrs' exultation, whose proclamation was the consubstantial Trinity

THE PRIEST THEN REMOVES THE CROWN FROM THE HEAD OF THE GROOM, SAYING:

Priest: May you be made great, O Bridegroom, like Abraham, and blessed like Isaac, and be increased like Jacob, going on your way in peace and carrying out in righteousness the commandments of God

HE THEN REMOVES THE CROWN FROM THE HEAD OF THE BRIDE, SAYING:

Priest: And may you, O Bride, be made great like Sarah, gladdened like Rebecca, and be increased like Rachel, rejoicing in your husband and keeping to the paths of the Law, for in this way God is well pleased

3- PRAYER FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE CROWNS

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord

Choir: Lord, have mercy

Priest: O Lord our God, you blessed the crown of the year, and allowed these crowns to be placed on the heads of those who were joined together by the law of marriage, and Imparted to them as if it were a reward of purity, because chaste are they whom you have joined together in a lawful marriage; also, in the removal of these crowns, † bless those who were joined to each other and protect their Indissoluble union, so that they may always give thanks to your all-holy name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: And now, O Lord, we your servants have completed the service of marriage as in Cana of Galilee, and have revealed its symbols, and so we give glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever

Choir: Amen

Priest: Glory to you, Christ God, our hope, glory to you

May Christ our true God, whose stay at Cana in Galilee revealed marriage to be honourable, through the intercessions of his all-pure Mother, of the holy, glorious and all-praiseworthy Apostles, of the holy, divinely crowned sovereigns, Constantine and Helen, equal to the Apostles, of the holy Great Martyr Procopios, and of all the Saints, have mercy on us and save us, for he is good and the lover of mankind.

Choir: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and save us. Amen..