

Revised

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269

FORM FOR THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGE

Announcement:

The Consistory announces that N... and N... have indicated their intention to be married according to the ordinance of God. They desire to begin this holy state in the Name of God and to complete it to His glory. If no lawful objection is brought forward, this marriage will be publicly solemnized,

- a) in a ceremony which will take place, the Lord willing
 - b) in a worship service, which will take place, the Lord willing
- (whichever applicable).

Introduction:

N... and N...., since the Consistory has duly made known to the Congregation your desire to be married, and no lawful objection has been presented, we may now proceed to the solemnization in the Name of the Lord.

The Institution of Marriage

Heb.13:4 Let us first listen to a summary of what the Word of God teaches us about marriage. We find there that marriage is an institution of God, which pleases Him, and must therefore be held in

Gen.1:27 honour among all. After God, our Father, had made heaven and

Gen.2:18- earth, He created man in His own image. And the Lord God said,

23 It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him. When the man did not find a helper fit for him among the creatures of God, the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man He made into a woman, and brought her to the man. Then the man said, This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.

1 Cor.7:2 Since the Lord forbids immorality, every man shall have his own wife, and every wife her own husband, so that our bodies may be preserved as temples of the Holy Spirit and we may glorify God in our body.

1 Cor.6:19,20
..... Our Lord Jesus Christ, who revealed His glory at the marriage feast at Cana, teaches us that marriage is an institution of God and should not be broken. He said, What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

Mal.2:16 God has made marriage such a strong bond that He hates divorce, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has said, Whoever divorces his wife except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery.

So we know that the Lord also today gives husband and wife to one another, and, united as by His hand, nothing shall separate them in this life.

The Profound Mystery

Eph.5:22-33 The Apostle Paul teaches us that the unity of husband and wife in marriage is a profound mystery, referring to the relationship between Christ and His Church. As Christ is ~~The~~ Head of the Church, so the husband is ~~The~~ head of his wife. Christ has loved His Church to the end, and gave Himself up for her, that she might be holy and without blemish. So the husband shall love his wife as his own body, care for her and cherish her, as Christ does the Church. As the Church is subject to Christ, so the wife shall be subject in everything to her husband, respect him and entrust herself to his loving care. Husband and wife shall assist each other in all good things, heartily forgiving one another their sins and shortcomings.

United in love, they will more and more reflect in their marriage, the unity of Christ and His Church.

Cor.7:28 It is also true, as the Apostle says, that those who marry will face troubles in this state and because of sin will experience many difficulties and afflictions. Yet they may also believe the promise of God that they, as heirs of the grace of life, will always receive His aid and protection, even when they least expect it.

The Purpose of Marriage

The Word of God also teaches us about the purpose of marriage.

In the first place, husband and wife shall live together happily in sincere love and help each other faithfully in all things ~~of~~ *that belong* to this life and ~~of~~ ^{to} the life to come.

Gen.1:28 Secondly, by marriage the human race is to be continued and increased, and under the blessing of God, husband and wife will

Eph.6:4 be fruitful and multiply. If it pleases God to give them children, they shall nurture these children in the true knowledge and fear of the Lord.

The Duties in Marriage

(The minister asks: Will you please rise?)

Bride and Bridegroom, hear from the Word of God what the Lord asks of you in marriage.

Bridegroom:→ Know that God has set you to be the head of your wife.

Love her as your own body, as Christ loved His Church *and gave Himself up for her.*

1 Pet.3:7 Guide, protect and comfort ^{your wife} ~~her~~. Live with her wisely and honour her, because together with you she is an heir to eternal life. ³ Then your prayers ~~together~~ will not be

Eph.4:28 hindered. Work faithfully in your daily calling, ~~so~~ that

you may ~~fully~~ support your family and also help those in need.

Bride: → Love your husband and be subject to him, as the Church is subject to Christ. Accept his guidance and assist him in all good things. Care for your family and household properly, and live modestly, in faith, and love, and holiness.

Help each other always and be faithful to each other. Diligently fulfill the calling which the Lord has given you in the Church and in this world. Believe God's sure promise, Blessed Ps.128:1,2 is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways. You shall be happy and it shall be well with you.

The Marriage Vows

(Minister: will you now join right hands).

To the Groom:

N..... Do you declare here before the Lord and these witnesses that you do take as your lawful wife N..... here present? Do you promise to love and guide her faithfully, to maintain her and to live with her in holiness, according to the ~~h~~oly gospel? Do you also promise never to forsake her, but to be true to her always, in good days and bad, in riches and poverty, in health and sickness, until death parts you? What is your answer?

(Answer is: I do).

To the Bride:

N..... Do you declare here before the Lord and these witnesses that you do take as your lawful husband N.... here present? Do you promise to love and obey him, to assist him, and live with him in all holiness, according to the ~~h~~oly gospel? Do you also

promise never to forsake him, but to be true to him always, in good days and bad, in riches and poverty, in health and sickness, until death parts you? What is your answer?

(Answer is: I do).

Minister:→ In the Name of the Lord, ~~and authorized by the government of this province,~~ I now pronounce you husband and wife.

The Father of all mercies, who by His grace called you to this holy state of marriage, bind you together in true love and faithfulness, and grant you His blessing, AMEN.

(Optional: Exchange of Rings, with the words:

Do you give this ring as a symbol of your constant faithfulness and abiding love?)

Intercession and Benediction

Bride and Groom, since we cannot expect anything from ourselves, you shall kneel before the Lord, and we shall pray with you and for you that He may enable you to fulfill your vows and will grant you His blessing. *First Vs 134:2 and after prayer standing R 134:3*

Almighty and heavenly Father, Thou hast said from the beginning that man should not be alone. We thank and praise Thee that Thou hast given this brother and sister to each other in marriage, that they may be one.

We pray Thee, grant them Thy Holy Spirit that they may live together according to Thy will in true faith. Help them to resist the power of sin, and to live in holiness before Thee. Lift up Thy countenance over them, and guide them in prosperity and adversity by Thy Fatherly hand. Grant them Thy blessing according to the covenant promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Confirm Thy covenant to them and to their children, if it pleases Thee to make them parents. Grant that these children

be nurtured in the fear of the Lord, to the glory of Thy Name and to the edification of the Church.

Let them live in communion with Thy Son, Jesus Christ, in the harmony of true love, and to the benefit of their neighbour.

Cause them to look forward with all the Church to the great day of the marriage feast of the Lamb.

Hear us, merciful Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, Who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, the only True God, lives and reigns forever.

Our Father who art in heaven.....

Amen.

Brother and Sister N.....

Our Lord God bless you richly and grant you a long and holy life together in all godliness, love and unity. AMEN.