

## The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage

*This liturgy is copyright of the Office of the General Convention, The Episcopal Church (TEC), 2015, and amended only to ensure that the marriages are legal in Ontario.*

### Concerning the Service

*This rite is appropriately celebrated in the context of the Holy Eucharist and may take place at the principal Sunday Liturgy. This rite then replaces the Ministry of the Word. A bishop or priest normally presides. Parallel texts from [Enriching Our Worship 1](#) are included as options for elements of this rite.*

*At least one of the couple must be a baptized Christian, and the marriage shall conform to the laws of the province and the canons of this church.*

*Two or more presenters, who may be friends, parents, family members, or drawn from the local assembly, may present the couple to the presider and the assembly.*

*As indicated in the opening address, the consent, and the blessing of the rings, the rite may be modified for use with a couple who have previously made a lifelong commitment to one another.*

# The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage

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## The Word of God

### GATHERING

*The couple joins the assembly.*

*A hymn of praise, psalm, or anthem may be sung, or instrumental music may be played.*

*The Presider says the following, the People standing*

*Presider:* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*People :* **Blessed be God, now and forever. Amen.**

*In place of the above may be said*

*Presider:* Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

*People:* **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

*From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost*

*Presider:* Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*People:* **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*In place of the above may be said*

*Presider:* Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*People:* **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*Then may be said*

*Presider:* Beloved, let us love one another,

*People:* **For love is of God.**

*Presider:* Whoever does not love does not know God,

*People:* **For God is love.**

*Presider:* Since God so loves us,

*People:* **Let us love one another.**

*The Presider shall address the assembly in these words*

Dear friends in Christ, *or* Dearly beloved,  
in the name of God and the Church we have come together today with N. N.  
and N. N., to witness the vows they make, committing themselves to one  
another in marriage according to the laws of the province of Ontario.

Forsaking all others, they will bind themselves to one another in a covenant of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, remaining true to one another in heart, body, and mind, as long as they both shall live.

The lifelong commitment of marriage is not to be entered into lightly or thoughtlessly, but responsibly and with reverence.

If anyone present knows a reason why N. and N. may not lawfully marry, they must declare it now.

N and N, if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

Let us pray, then, that God will give them the strength to remain steadfast in what they vow this day.

Let us also pray for the generosity  
to support them in the commitment they undertake  
and for the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

*Or this, for those who have previously made a lifelong commitment to one another*

Dear friends in Christ, *or* Dearly beloved,  
in the name of God and the Church we have come together today with N. N. and N. N. to witness the sacred vows they make this day as they are married according to the laws of Ontario and reaffirm their commitment to one another. Forsaking all others, they will renew their covenant of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, remaining true to one another in heart, body, and mind, as long as they both shall live.

If anyone present knows a reason why N. and N. may not lawfully marry, they must declare it now.

N and N, if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

Let us pray, then, that God will give them the strength to remain steadfast in what they vow this day.

Let us also pray for the generosity  
to support them in the commitment they undertake,  
and for the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

## THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Presider:* The Lord be with you. *or* God be with you.

*People:* **And also with you.**

*Presider:* Let us pray.

*The Presider says one of the following Collects*

God of abundance: assist by your grace N. and N., whose covenant of love and fidelity we witness this day. Grant them your protection, that with firm resolve they may honor and keep the vows they make; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*or this*

Almighty and everliving God: look tenderly upon N. and N., who stand before you in the company of your Church. Let their life together bring them great joy. Grant them so to love selflessly and live humbly, that they may be to one another and to the world a witness and a sign of your never-failing love and care; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, to the ages of ages. Amen.

*or this*

O God, faithful and true, whose steadfast love endures for ever: we give you thanks for sustaining N. and N. in the life they share and for bringing them to this day. Nurture them and fill them with joy in their life together, continuing the good work you have begun in them; and grant us, with them, a dwelling place eternal in the heavens where all your people will share the joy of perfect love, and where you, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

*or this, for those who bring children*

Holy Trinity, one God, three Persons perfect in unity and equal in majesty: Draw together with bonds of love and affection N. and N., who with their families seek to live in harmony and forbearance all their days, that their joining together will be to us a reflection of that perfect communion which is your very essence and life, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who live and reign in glory everlasting. Amen.

## THE LESSONS

*The people sit. Then one or more of the following passages of Scripture is read. If the Holy Communion is to be celebrated, a passage from the Gospels always concludes the Readings. When the blessing is celebrated in the context of the Sunday Eucharist, the Readings of the Sunday are used, except with the permission of the Bishop.*

Ruth 1:16-17  
1 Samuel 18:1b, 3; 20:16-17; 42a;  
1 Samuel 18:1-4  
Romans 12:9-18  
Corinthians 12:31b-13:13  
Corinthians 5:17-20  
Galatians 5:14, 22-26

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12  
Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7  
Micah 4:1-4  
Ephesians 3:14-21  
Colossians 3:12-17  
1 John 3:18-24  
1 John 4:7-16, 21

*When a biblical passage other than one from the Gospels is to be read, the Reader announces it with these words*

**Reader:** A Reading from\_\_\_\_\_.

*After the Reading, the Reader may say*

The Word of the Lord.

*or* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*or* Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

*Between the Readings, a psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said. Appropriate psalms are Psalm 65, Psalm 67, Psalm 85:7-13, Psalm 98, Psalm 100, Psalm 126, Psalm 127, Psalm 133, Psalm 148, and Psalm 149:1-5.*

*Appropriate passages from the Gospels are*

Matthew 5:1-16

John 15:9-17

Mark 12:28-34

John 17:1-2, 18-26

Luke 6:32-38

*All standing, the Deacon or Priest reads the Gospel, first saying*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to\_\_\_\_\_.

*or* The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to\_\_\_\_\_.

**People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

*After the Gospel, the Reader says*

The Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## THE SERMON

## The Witnessing of the Vows and the Blessing of the Covenant

*The couple comes before the assembly. If there is to be a presentation, the presenters stand with the couple, and the Presider says to them*

*Presider:* Who presents N. and N., as they seek the blessing of God and the Church on their love and life together?

*Presenters:* We do.

*Presider:* Will you love, respect, and pray for N. and N., and do all in your power to stand with them in the life they will share?

*Presenters:* We will.

*The Presider then addresses the couple, saying*

*Presider:* N. and N., you have come before God and the Church to exchange and renew solemn vows with one another and to ask God's blessing.

*The Presider addresses one member of the couple, saying*

*Presider:* N., do you freely and unreservedly offer yourself to N.?

*Answer:* I do.

*Presider:* Will you continue to live together in faithfulness and holiness of life as long as you both shall live?

*Answer:* I will, with God's help.

*The Presider addresses the other member of the couple, saying*

*Presider:* N., do you freely and unreservedly offer yourself to N.?

*Answer:* I do.

*Presider:* Will you continue to live together in faithfulness and holiness of life as long as you both shall live?

*Answer:* I will, with God's help.

*The assembly stands, the couple faces the People, and the Presider addresses them, saying*

*Presider:* Will all of you gathered to witness these vows do all in your power to uphold and honor this couple in the covenant they make?

*People:* **We will.**

*Presider:* Will you pray for them, especially in times of trouble, and celebrate with them in times of joy?

*People:* **We will.**

## THE PRAYERS

*The Presider then introduces the prayers*

Presider: Then let us pray for N. and N. in their life together and for the concerns of this community.

*A Deacon or another leader bids prayers for the couple. Prayers for the Church and for the world, for the concerns of the local community, for those who suffer or face trouble, and for the departed are also appropriate*

*Adaptations or insertions may be made to the form that follows. A bar in the margin indicates a bidding that may be omitted.*

Leader: For N. and N., seeking your blessing and the blessing of your holy people;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: For a spirit of loving-kindness to shelter them all their days;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: For friends to support them and communities to enfold them;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: For peace in their home and love in their family;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: For the grace and wisdom to care for the children you entrust to them [or may entrust to them];  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: For the honesty to acknowledge when they hurt each other, and the humility to seek each other's forgiveness and yours;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: For the outpouring of your love through their work and witness;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: For the strength to keep the vows each of us has made;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

*The leader may add one or more of the following biddings*

*Leader:* For all who have been reborn and made new in the waters of Baptism;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

*People:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* For those who lead and serve in communities of faith;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

*People:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* For those who seek justice, peace, and concord among nations;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

*People:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* For those who are sick or suffering, homeless or poor;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

*People:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* For victims of violence and those who inflict it;  
Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

*People:* **Hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* For communion with all who have died [especially those whom we  
remember this day:];

Loving God, *or* Lord, in your mercy,

*People:* **Hear our prayer.**

*The Presider concludes the Prayers with the following or another appropriate Collect*

*Presider:* Giver of every gift, source of all goodness, hear the prayers we bring before you for N. and N., who seek your blessing this day. Strengthen them as they share in the saving work of Jesus, and bring about for them and for all you have created the fullness of life he promised, who now lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

*If the Eucharist is to follow, the Lord's Prayer is omitted here.*

*Leader:* As our Savior Christ has taught us,  
we now pray,

All: **Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*or*

*Leader:* And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us,  
we are bold 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.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## **The Marriage**

*The People sit. The couple stands, facing the Presider.*

*Presider:* N. and N., I invite you now, illumined by the Word of God and strengthened by the prayer of this community, to make your covenant before God and the Church.

*Each member of the couple, in turn, takes the hand of the other and says*

In the name of God,

I, N., give myself to you, N., and take you to myself.

I will support and care for you by the grace of God: in times of sickness, in times of health.

I will hold and cherish you in the love of Christ: in times of plenty, in times of want.

I will honor and love you with the Spirit's help: in times of anguish, in times of joy,

forsaking all others, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

*or this*

In the name of God,

I, N., give myself to you, N., and take you to myself.

I will support and care for you:

in times of sickness, in times of health. I will hold and cherish you:  
in times of plenty, in times of want. I will honor and love you:  
in times of anguish, in times of joy,  
forsaking all others, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

*If rings are to be exchanged, they are brought before the Presider, who prays using the following words*

Presider: Let us pray.  
Bless, O God, these rings  
as signs of the enduring covenant  
N. and N. have made with each other, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*The two people place the rings on the fingers of one another, first the one, then the other, saying*

N., I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow,  
and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you,  
in the name of God. or in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*If the two have previously given and worn rings as a symbol of their commitment, the rings may be blessed on the hands of the couple, the Presider saying*

Presider Let us pray.  
By the rings which they have worn, faithful God,  
N. and N. have shown to one another and the world their love and faithfulness.  
Bless now these rings, that from this day forward they may be signs of the vows  
N. and N. have exchanged in your presence and in the communion of your  
Church, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

*The Presider joins the right hands of the couple and says*

*Presider:* Now that N. and N. have exchanged vows of love and fidelity in the presence of God and the Church, I pronounce that they are married according to the laws of the province of Ontario and bound to one another as long as they both shall live. Amen.

## BLESSING OF THE COUPLE

*As the couple stands or kneels, the Presider invokes God's blessing upon them, saying*

*Presider:* Let us pray.  
Most gracious God,  
we praise you for the tender mercy and unfailing care revealed to us in Jesus the Christ and for the great joy and comfort bestowed upon us in the gift of human love.  
We give you thanks for N. and N.,  
and the covenant of faithfulness they have made.  
Pour out the abundance of your Holy Spirit upon them.  
Keep them in your steadfast love;  
protect them from all danger;  
fill them with your wisdom and peace;  
lead them in holy service to each other and the world.

*The Presider continues with one of the following*

*Presider:* God the Father,  
God the Son,  
God the Holy Spirit,  
bless, preserve, and keep you,  
and mercifully grant you rich and boundless grace,  
that you may please God in body and soul.  
God make you a sign of the loving-kindness and steadfast fidelity  
manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior,  
and bring you at last to the delight of the heavenly banquet, where he lives  
and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

*or this*

*Presider:* God, the holy and undivided Trinity, bless, preserve, and keep you,  
and mercifully grant you rich and boundless grace,  
that you may please God in body and soul.  
God make you a sign of the loving-kindness and steadfast fidelity  
manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior,  
and bring you at last to the delight of the heavenly banquet,  
where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

## THE PEACE

*The Presider bids the Peace.*

*Presider:* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People:* **And also with you.**

*In place of the above may be said*

*Presider* The peace of Christ be always with you.

*People:* **And also with you.**

*The liturgy continues with the Holy Communion. When the Eucharist is not celebrated, the Presider blesses the people. The Deacon, or in the absence of a Deacon, the Priest, dismisses them.*

## AT THE EUCHARIST

*The liturgy continues with the Offertory, at which the couple may present the offerings of bread and wine. The following proper preface may be said*

*Presider:* Because in the giving of two people to each other in faithful love you reveal the joy and abundant life you share with your Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

*The following post-communion prayer may be said*

*Presider:* God our strength and joy,  
we thank you for the communion of our life together,  
for the example of holy love that you give us in N. and N.,  
and for the Sacrament of the Body and Blood  
of our Savior Jesus Christ.  
Grant that it may renew our hope  
and nourish us for the work you set before us  
to witness to the presence of Christ in the world, through the power of your  
Spirit, and to the glory of your Name. **Amen.**

## The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage (2)

*This liturgy is copyright of the Office of the General Convention, The Episcopal Church (TEC), 2015, and amended only to ensure that the marriages are legal in Ontario.*

*Adapted from The Book of Common Prayer 1979*

### Concerning the Service

*At least one of the parties must be a baptized Christian; the ceremony must be attested by at least two witnesses; and the marriage must conform to the laws of the Province of Ontario.*

*A priest or a bishop normally presides at the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage, because such ministers alone have the function of pronouncing the nuptial blessing, and of celebrating the Holy Eucharist.*

*When both a bishop and a priest are present and officiating, the bishop should pronounce the blessing and preside at the Eucharist.*

*A deacon, or an assisting priest, may deliver the charge, ask for the Declaration of Consent, read the Gospel, and perform other assisting functions at the Eucharist.*

*Where it is permitted by civil law that deacons may perform marriages, and no priest or bishop is available, a deacon may use the service which follows, omitting the nuptial blessing which follows The Prayers.*

*It is desirable that the Lessons from the Old Testament and the Epistles be read by lay persons.*

*In the opening exhortation (at the symbol of N. N.), the full names of the persons to be married are declared. Subsequently, only their Christian names are used.*

## The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage (2)

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*At the time appointed, the persons to be married, with their witnesses, assemble in the church or some other appropriate place.*

*During their entrance, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung, or instrumental music may be played.*

*Then the Celebrant, facing the people and the persons to be married, addresses the congregation and says*

Celebrant: Dearly beloved: We have come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the joining together of N. and N. in Holy Matrimony. The joining of two people in a life of mutual fidelity signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, and so it is worthy of being honored among all people. The union of two people in heart, body, and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the gift of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Therefore marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God. Into this holy union N. N. and N. N. now come to be joined.

If any of you can show just cause why they may not lawfully be married, speak now; or else for ever hold your peace.

*Then the Celebrant says to the persons to be married*

Celebrant: I require and charge you both, here in the presence of God, that if either of you knows any reason why you may not be united in marriage lawfully, and in accordance with God's Word, you do now confess it.

## THE DECLARATION OF CONSENT

*The Celebrant says to one member of the couple, then to the other*

**Celebrant:** N., will you have this woman/man/person to be your wife/husband/spouse; to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love her/him, comfort her/him, honor and keep her/him, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her/him as long as you both shall live?

**Answer:** I will.

*The Celebrant then addresses the congregation, saying*

**Celebrant:** Will all of you witnessing these promises do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their marriage?

**People:** **We will.**

*If there is to be a presentation or a giving in marriage, it takes place at this time.*

*A hymn, psalm, or anthem may follow.*

## The Ministry of the Word

*The Celebrant then says to the people*

**Celebrant:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

**Celebrant:** Let us pray.

O gracious and everliving God, you have created humankind in your image: look mercifully upon N. and N. who come to you seeking your blessing, and assist them with your grace, that with true fidelity and steadfast love they may honor and keep the promises and vows they make; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Then one or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture is read. Other readings from Scripture suitable for the occasion may be used. If there is to be a Communion, a passage from the Gospel always concludes the Readings.*

Genesis 1:26–28 (*Male and female he created them*)

Song of Solomon 2:10–13; 8:6–7 (*Many waters cannot quench love*)

Tobit 8:5b–8 (*New English Bible*) (*That she and I may grow old together*)

1 Corinthians 13:1–13 (*Love is patient and kind*)

Ephesians 3:14–19 (*The Father from whom every family is named*)

Ephesians 5:1–2 (*Walk in love, as Christ loved us*)

Colossians 3:12–17 (*Love which binds everything together in harmony*)

1 John 4:7–16 (*Let us love one another, for love is of God*)

*Between the Readings, a psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said.*

*Appropriate psalms are Psalm 67, Psalm 127, and Psalm 128.*

*When a passage from the Gospel is to be read, all stand, and the Deacon or Minister appointed says*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to\_\_\_\_\_  
**People:           Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Matthew 5:1–10 (*The Beatitudes*)

Matthew 5:13–16 (*You are the light ... Let your light so shine*)

Matthew 7:21, 24–29 (*Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock*)

John 15:9–12 (*Love one another as I have loved you*)

*After the Gospel, the Reader says*

**Reader:**       The Gospel of the Lord.

**People:**       **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

*A homily or other response to the Readings may follow.*

## **The Marriage**

*Each member of the couple, in turn, takes the right hand of the other and says*

In the Name of God, I, N., take you, N., to be my wife/husband/spouse, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.

*The Priest may ask God's blessing on rings as follows*

Bless, O Lord, these rings to be signs of the vows by which N. and N. have bound themselves to each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The giver places the ring on the ring finger of the other's hand and says*

N., I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit [or in the Name of God].

*Then the Celebrant joins the right hands of the couple and says*

*Celebrant:* Now that N. and N. have given themselves to each other by solemn vows, with the joining of hands and the giving and receiving of rings, I pronounce that they are wed to one another, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder.

*People:* Amen.

## **THE PRAYERS**

*All standing, the Celebrant says*

*Celebrant:* Let us pray together in the words our Savior taught us.

*People and Celebrant:*

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*or*

**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.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

*If Communion is to follow, the Lord's Prayer may be omitted here.*

*The Deacon or other person appointed reads the following prayers, to which the People respond, saying, Amen. If there is not to be a Communion, one or more of the prayers may be omitted.*

Leader: Let us pray.

Eternal God, creator and preserver of all life, author of salvation, and giver of all grace: Look with favor upon the world you have made, and for which your Son gave his life, and especially upon N. and N. whom you make one flesh in Holy Matrimony. **Amen.**

Give them wisdom and devotion in the ordering of their common life, that each may be to the other a strength in need, a counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy. **Amen.**

Grant that their wills may be so knit together in your will, and their spirits in your Spirit, that they may grow in love and peace with you and one another all the days of their life. **Amen.**

Give them grace, when they hurt each other, to recognize and acknowledge their fault, and to seek each other's forgiveness and yours. **Amen.**

Make their life together a sign of Christ's love to this sinful and broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair. **Amen.**

Bestow on them, if it is your will, the gift and heritage of children, and the grace to bring them up to know you, to love you, and to serve you. **Amen.**

Give them such fulfillment of their mutual affection that they may reach out in love and concern for others. **Amen.**

Grant that all married persons who have witnessed these vows may find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed. **Amen.**

Grant that the bonds of our common humanity, by which all your children are united one to another, and the living to the dead, may be so transformed by your grace, that your will may be done on earth as it is in heaven; where, O Father, with your Son and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign in perfect unity, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## THE BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

*The People remain standing. The couple kneel, and the Priest says one of the following prayers*

Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us, to be born of a human mother, and to make the way of the cross to be the way of life. We thank you, also, for consecrating the union of two people in his Name. By the power of your Holy Spirit, pour out the abundance of your blessing upon N. and N. Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their life and in their death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that table where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*or this*

O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church: Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The couple still kneeling, the Priest adds this blessing*

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that you may faithfully live together in this life, and in the age to come have life everlasting. **Amen.**

## THE PEACE

*The Celebrant may say to the People*

*Celebrant:* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People:* **And also with you.**

*The newly married couple then greet each other, after which greetings may be exchanged throughout the congregation. When Communion is not to follow, the wedding party leaves the church. A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung, or instrumental music may be played.*