

Guidelines for Marriage

St. Paul's Healdsburg

The Man, facing the woman and taking her right hand in his, says

In the Name of God, I, *N.*, take you, *N.*, to be my wife,
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.

Then they loose their hands, and the Woman, still facing the man, takes his right hand in hers, and says

In the Name of God. I, *N.*, take you, *N.*, to be my husband,
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.

They loose their hands.

The priest may ask God's blessings on a ring or rings as follows

Bless, O Lord, this ring to be a sign of the vows by which this man and this woman 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*).

Candidates will memorize the vows and the sentences said when giving the rings.

Requirements and preparation for candidates

Religious commitment: At least one of the candidates must be a baptized Christian. Both candidates must be open to the experience of conversion and renewed commitment to the Faith as they prepare for the celebration of the Sacrament. Candidates will be asked to attend church regularly during the period of preparation.

Preparation: During a period of *no less than thirty days* the priest and the candidates will meet a minimum of five times. During these meetings they will discuss the Christian doctrine of marriage, personal expectations for marriage, family background, sex and money, and other related issues.

After the first meeting the priest will tell the candidates definitely whether he is willing to proceed with preparation for the service. No definite plans for the service should be made until after this decision has been clearly given.

Candidates who live elsewhere may make arrangements with a local priest to do the preparation. In such cases a letter from the priest stating that he is doing the premarital preparation is required. All candidates should prepare for a marriage by a thorough examination of conscience. Confession (see page 446 in the Book of Common Prayer) is highly recommended.

Divorced Candidates: Candidates who have been married and divorced will be asked to discuss the former marriage and the cause of its failure. At least one additional meeting will be required, thus a minimum of *forty days* must be allowed for preparation. In addition to discussing the former marriage with the priest, divorced candidates will prepare a written statement including the following information:

1. Dates of marriage, separation(s), decision to divorce, filing for divorce;
2. Reasons for divorce;
3. Present relationship with former spouse and children.

This statement must be signed by two persons who affirm that it is true. The candidate must also supply a copy of the final decree of dissolution. The statement and the copy of the decree will become part of a file that will be sent to the Bishop of the Diocese of Northern California, whose consent is required for divorced persons to be married by a priest of this diocese.

It is the priest's responsibility to determine whether or not the former marriage is finally, irrevocably, and legally ended. The priest is also to ask if the candidate is truly sorry for the failure of the former marriage and if he or she believes in the ideal of life-long marriage. The candidate must give evidence that any moral or financial obligations continuing from the failed marriage are being fulfilled.

The Service: The service will be that in the Book of Common Prayer, pages 422-432, without interruption or change. The Rector does not wish to conduct services outside the church building and would prefer not to be asked. However, he is willing to give consent for any other priest to officiate outdoors or elsewhere in the parish.

Questions about flowers and other church arrangements will be answered by the Wedding Coordinator, who is a member of the Altar Guild. Music will be selected and performed by the parish organist. All vocal music shall be sung from texts of scripture or other traditional sacred texts. Please do not ask for permission to sing or play secular music.

No photographs are to be taken during the service.

Fees and Donations: The fee for the parish organist is \$150 and is to be paid in advance at the rehearsal.

The fee for the services of the Altar Guild is \$250 and should also be paid at the rehearsal.

Donation to St. Paul's Discretionary Fund: Candidates may make a donation to St. Paul's Discretionary Fund, a fund used by the rector to help people in need (rent, utilities, prescriptions, etc). This is a donation and you may donate any amount you choose. However, I request that you prayerfully consider giving a tithe (10%) on the cost of your wedding celebration (reception, flowers, photographer, etc). If your reception costs \$1000, you would donate \$100 to the discretionary to help the needy. If your celebration costs \$5000, you would give \$500, \$10,000, \$1000; and so on. None of this donation goes to the rector's personal income.

License: A marriage license must be presented to the priest before he can officiate at the service. Licenses are procured from the Office of the County Clerk. In Sonoma County call 527-3700 for details as to fees, blood tests, etc. Please present the license to the priest at the rehearsal. He will not conduct the service unless he has the license in his possession.

—The Reverend Canon Marvin Bowers, Rector

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Declaration of Intention

We,

and

desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the liturgical forms authorized by this Church.

We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, for the procreation (if it may be) of children and their physical and spiritual nurture, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society.

And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help therein.

Signature of Groom

Signature of Bride (Maiden Name)

Dated _____ *A.D.* _____