

Crowning (Marriage)

The Betrothal

(The couple to be crowned in marriage and their attendants assemble in the narthex before the doors of the church. When everything is ready, the clergy go out to meet them. The priest signs with the Cross three times, and then exclaims:)

Priest: Blessed is our God always, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Eternal God. You gather the separate into one and make the bond of love unbreakable. You blessed Isaac and Rebecca and marked them as heirs of Your promise. Bless also these servants of Yours, G. and B., and guide them in good works of every kind. For You are a merciful and man-befriending God, and we send up glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Priest: † Peace to all of you.

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Lord our God, You betrothed the Church, a pure virgin called from among the nations: bless this betrothal, join together these servants of Yours and keep them in peace and concord. For all glory, honour and worship are rightfully Yours, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The priest gives the rings (after blessing them), first to the groom (right hand):

Priest: The servant of God G. is betrothed to the handmaid of God B., in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Then, to the bride:

Priest: The handmaid of God B., is betrothed to the servant of God G., in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Lord our God. You accompanied the servant of Patriarch Abraham when he was

sent to Mesopotamia to choose a wife for his lord Isaac. By means of a sign, the drawing of water from the well, You showed him that he should betroth Rebecca. Bless the betrothal of Your servants G. and B., and make the word they have spoken a reality.

Sustain them with the holy union that comes from You, for You made male and female from the beginning and You are the One who matches a wife to her husband so that she may be his helpmate and the human race may continue. And so, Lord our God, who extended Your faithfulness to Your inheritance and Your own promise to Your servants, our fathers, Your chosen ones in every generation: Look kindly on Your servant G. and Your handmaid B., and make good their pledge in trust, concord, fidelity and love. For You, Lord, have declared that pledges be given and faithfully fulfilled.

By a ring power was given to Joseph in Egypt. □By a ring Daniel was exalted in the land of Babylon. □By a ring Tamar's innocence was proven.

By a ring our heavenly Father showed compassion for his (prodigal) son, for he said: "Put a ring on his right hand, kill the fatted calf and let us eat and celebrate."

Your own right hand, Lord, armed Moses in the Red Sea. And just as Your faithful word established the heavens and made the earth's foundations firm, so too will Your mighty word and Your uplifted arm bless the right hands of Your servants.

Therefore, O Master, with a heavenly blessing bless now this putting on of rings, and may Your angel go before Your servants all the days of their life. For You are the One who bless and sanctify all things, and we send up glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The Order of Crowning

Psalm 127

Blest are all who fear the lord, □who walk in His ways. □You will eat the fruit of your labours, □blessed are you and it will be well with you. □Your wife will be like a fruitful vine □on the walls of your house. □Your sons around your table □like young shoots around an olive tree. □Behold. Thus will the man be blessed □who fears the Lord. □May the Lord bless you from Zion □and you will see the prosperity of Jerusalem □all the days of your life. □You will see your children's children: □Peace be on Israel!

Declaration of Consent

Priest: Have you, G., a good and honest desire and firm intention to take to yourself as a wife this woman, B., whom you see here before you?

Bridegroom: I have.

Priest: You have not promised yourself to another woman?

Bridegroom: I have not.

Priest: Have you, B., a good and honest desire and firm intention to take to yourself as a husband this man, G., whom you see here before you?

Bride: I have.

Priest: You have not promised yourself to another man?

Bride: I have not.

Priest: Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Great Ekteny

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For peace in the whole world, the well-being of God's holy Churches and the unity of all mankind, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this holy temple and those who enter it with faith, devotion and reverence for God, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the holy ecumenical hierarch N., Pope of Rome, his beatitude, our Major Archbishop, N., our most reverend Metropolitan N., our God-loving Bishop N., for the honoured priesthood, the deacons who serve in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our country, its government and people, and for those who protect us, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the servants of God, G. and B., now being joined to each other in the communion of marriage, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That these crowns may be blessed by the power, indwelling and energy of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this marriage may be blessed as was that in Cana of Galilee, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That they may be given perfect love, peace and mutual support, and shine as living examples of Christian life, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That they may be delighted with the sight of sons and daughters, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That they may be blessed in the raising of their children and be given a blameless life, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That every request helpful toward salvation may be granted to them and to us, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That they and we may be delivered from all danger, violence, oppression and need, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Remembering our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, and all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For all glory, honour and worship are rightfully Yours, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Then the priest, facing the spouses, says one or both of the following two prayers. But if time is lacking, he may omit them and immediately begin the third prayer: Holy God...

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Most pure God. Builder of every created thing. Because of Your man-befriending love You changed the rib of our forefather Adam into a woman. You blessed them and said: "Be fruitful and multiply, subdue the earth." By uniting them, You made one flesh

of the two – "this is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife and the two become one body:" and "what God has united, man must not separate."

By opening Sarah's womb You blessed Your servant Abraham and made him the father of many nations. You gave Isaac to Rebecca and blessed her when she bore children. You joined Jacob to Rachel and drew the twelve patriarchs from his line. You made Joseph one with Asenath and gave them Ephraim and Manasseh as the fruit of childbirth. You accepted Zachary and Elizabeth and made their offspring the forerunner. You made the ever-virgin sprout into flesh from the root of Jesse and, taking flesh from her, You were born for the salvation of the human race. You went to Cana in Galilee with Your unexpected gift and abundant goodness and blessed the marriage there in order to show Your approval of lawful wedlock and its fruit, the birth of children.

Most holy Master, accept the prayer we Your servants make: because You went to Cana, bless this marriage after coming here, too, with Your now unseen presence, and give these servants of Yours G. and B., a peaceful life, length of days, chastity, love for one another in a bond of peace, long-lived descendants, gratitude for their children and an unfading crown of glory. Let them see their children's children, keep their bed unassailed, give to them of the dew of the heavens above and of the fertility of the earth. Fill their houses with grain, wine and oil, yes, with every good thing, so that they in turn may share with those in need. At the same time, grant to those present here with them every request helpful toward salvation.

For You are a God of mercy, compassion and man-befriending love, and to You, with Your beginningless Father, and Your most holy, good and life-creating Spirit, we send up glory, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Prayer at the Binding of the Hands

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Holy God. You built man out of dust and out of his rib You built woman. You joined her to him as a suitable helpmate because You, in Your majesty, saw fit that the man should not be alone on the earth. And now, O Master, unite this servant of Yours G., and this handmaid of Yours B., for You are the One who match a wife to her husband. Unite them in concord, weave them into one flesh and give them the reward of fine children.

For Yours is the reign and Yours are the Kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Marriage Vows

I, N., take you, N., to be my wife (husband), and promise that in marriage I will love you, be true to you and honour you and be faithful to you all the days of my life: so help me God, one in the Holy Trinity and all the saints.

The priest looses their hands and says, while blessing them:

Priest: What God has united, man must not separate.

The Crowning

Then, the priest places the crowns on the couple individually, saying:

The servant of God, G., is crowned for the handmaid of God, B., in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The handmaid of God, B., is crowned for the servant of God, G., in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The priest, blessing them thrice, exclaims:

Lord our God, crown them with glory and honour.

Prokeimenon

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: Peace to all of you.

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive!

(t. 8) You have placed upon their heads crowns of precious stones; they have asked You to give them life and You did so!

verse: Yes, You will give them everlasting blessings, You will gladden them with the joy of Your presence.

Epistle

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the letter of the holy Apostle Paul to the Ephesians.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Brethren, give thanks to God the Father always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Give way to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be submissive to your husbands as if to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of his body the Church, as well as its Saviour. As the Church submits to Christ, so wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church. He gave himself up for her to

make her holy, purifying her in the bath of water by the power of the word, to present to himself a glorious Church, holy and immaculate, without stain or wrinkle or anything of that sort. Husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. Observe that no one ever hates his own flesh; no, he nourishes and takes care of it as Christ cares for the Church – for we are members of his body. "This is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife and the two become one body." This is a great mystery, but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church. In any case, you, also each one of you, should love his wife as he loves himself, the wife, for her part, showing respect for her husband.(5: 20-33)

Alleluia

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Verse: You, Lord, will hold us in Your keeping and protect us from this generation and forever.

Gospel

Priest: Wisdom! Stand aright! Let us listen to the Holy Gospel. Peace to all of you.

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

All: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

Priest: At that time: There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had likewise been invited to the celebration. At a certain point the wine ran out and the mother of Jesus told him, "They have no more wine." Jesus replied, "Woman, how does this concern of yours involve me? My hour has not yet come." His mother instructed those waiting on table, "Do whatever he tells you." As prescribed for Jewish ceremonial washings, there were at hand six stone water jars, each one holding fifteen to twenty-five gallons. "Fill those jars with water," Jesus ordered, at which they filled them to the brim. "Now," he said, "draw some out and take it to the waiter in charge." They did as he instructed them. The waiter in charge tasted the water made wine, without knowing where it had come from; only the waiters knew, since they had drawn the water. Then the waiter in charge called the groom over and remarked to him: "People usually serve the choice wine first, then, when they have been drinking awhile, a lesser vintage. What you have done is keep the choice wine until now." Jesus worked this first of his signs at Cana in Galilee. Thus did he reveal his glory and his disciples believed in him.(2: 1-11)

All: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

Homily

Ekteny of Supplication

Deacon: Let us all say, with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say: All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Lord, Almighty One, God of our fathers, we implore You: Hear us and have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy. We implore You: Hear us and have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Let us also pray for the servants of God G. and B., now being joined to one another: for their health and salvation.

All: Lord, have mercy. (3)

The following petitions may be added:

Deacon: That Christ our God, who shared the life of an earthly home in Nazareth and worked the first of his signs at Cana in Galilee, might abide in their home, aid them ministering to others as he himself ministered to men, and mark them as living signs of his own saving love, let us all say:

All: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Let us also pray that they find joy and satisfaction in all their endeavours and that the temptations of earthly glory never blind them, but rather, that their earnest desire always be the riches awaiting them in the life to come: O good Master, hear us and have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Let us also pray that this wedding day may bring renewed joy and peace to the marriages of all who have gathered together for this celebration: Lord, hear us and have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy. (3)

The following petition is always the last:

Deacon: Let us also pray for those who bring offerings and do good in this honoured house of God, for those who work in its service, for Your people present here awaiting the great and abundant mercy which comes from You, for those who have been kind to us, and for all orthodox Christians.

All: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Priest: For You a God of mercy, so full of love for mankind, and we give glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Prayer

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Lord our God. In Your plan of salvation You saw fit to prove marriage honourable by going to Cana in Galilee. You have consented to join together Your servants G. and B., now keep them in peace and concord. Prove their marriage honourable, preserve their bed undefiled, let their life together remain without blemish and find them worthy of reaching a fruitful old age as, with a pure heart, they do whatever You command. For You are our God, a merciful and saving God, and to You, with Your beginningless Father and Your all-holy good and life-creating Spirit, we send up glory now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Ekteny Of Petition

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this whole day be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask the Lord.

All: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: For the angel of peace, the faithful guide and guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord.

All: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: That our sins be forgiven and our failings set right, let us ask the Lord.

All: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: For what is good and beneficial to our souls, and for peace in the world, let us ask the Lord.

All: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: That we may spend the rest of our lives in peace and repentance, let us ask the Lord.

All: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: For a Christian end to our lives—painless, unashamed and peaceful, and for a good account at the awesome judgement seat of Christ, let us ask.

All: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Having asked for unity of faith and fellowship in the Holy Spirit, let us commit ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Our Father

Priest: And make us worthy, O Master, that confidently and without fear we may dare call You Father, O God of heaven, as we say:

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 the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Prayer at the Bowing of Heads

Priest: † Peace to all of you.

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: O God, with Your strength You created everything. You placed the universe upon a firm foundation and beautified the crowns of all who have been created by You. So also, bless these Your servants who have been crowned in the community of marriage with a spiritual blessing. For Your name has been blessed, and Your kingdom has been glorified; the kingdom of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The Common Cup

The glass of wine commemorates the presence of Christ in their marriage, as it was at the marriage feast in Cana. This "Cup of Fellowship" indicates the oneness of life and love of the couple and their willingness to drink from the cup of life together, sharing both its joys and sorrows.

Procession

The priest leads the couple around the tetrapod three times, while the clergy and people sing the tropars:

Dance, Isaiah! □ A Virgin has conceived □ and has borne a Son, Emmanuel, □ Who is God and

Man: "his name is "Orient" "When we extol him We call that Virgin blessed!
 O holy martyrs! "You fought well and have received your crowns. "On our behalf entreat
 the Lord "to have mercy on our souls!

Glory to You, O Christ God, "the apostles' boast, the martyrs' joy, "they whose
 preaching was the Trinity "One in Being!

The Removal of the Crowns

When the procession is completed, the priest takes the crowns from the heads of the newly-married couple, saying:

Bridegroom! Be exalted like Abraham, blessed like Isaac and multiplied like Jacob, walking in peace and righteously doing God's commandments!

And you, O bride! Be exalted like Sarah, gladdened like Rebecca and multiplied like Rachel, being happy with your husband and keeping the precepts of the Law. Do this and you will please God.

Prayer

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: God, our God. You went to Cana in Galilee and blessed the marriage there. Bless too these servants of Yours now joined together by Your providence in the communion of marriage. Bless their comings and goings, give their life a great store of good things and receive their crowns in Your kingdom, keeping them without spot or stain or reproach for ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Nuptial Blessing

Priest: Peace to all of you.

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

All: To You, O Lord.

May the Father, the Son † and the Holy Spirit, "the all-holy Trinity, One in Being, "the Source of life, one Godhead and one Kingship, "bless you and give you long life, fine children, success in life and Faith, "a great store of the good things of this earth "and find you worthy of receiving as well "the good things which have been promised. "We ask this through the prayers of the holy Theotokos "and those of all the saints.

All: Amen.

Dismissal

Deacon: Wisdom!

All: More honourable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, without stain you bore the Word of God. O true Theotokos, we extol you.

Priest: Glory to You, Christ God, our hope, glory to You.

All: Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and for ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (3). Give the blessing.

Priest: May Christ our true God, who proved marriage honourable by His presence in Cana of Galilee, through the prayers of His most pure Mother, of the holy and ever-honoured Apostles, of the holy divinely-crowned sovereigns and equals-to-the-apostles, Constantine and Helen, of the holy great-martyr Procopius, and through the prayers of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for he is good and the lover of mankind.

All: Amen.

Many Years

Deacon: To the newly-wedded G. and B., send, O Lord, true and faithful love, a peaceful, happy and godly life and long-lived descendants, and grant them many years!

And the entire assembly sings:

God, grant them many years, many happy years! (2) □ May they be blessed with health and salvation! □ God, grant them many happy years!

Glory to God for all things!