


The Sacrament of Matrimony: Preparation, Ritual And How to Journey with Couples Called to Marriage



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Ordained – May 22, 1993

Education

Bachelors of Arts in Drama – University of Houston – 1987

Master of Divinity – University of St. Thomas – 1993

Master of Arts – Theology (Systematics) – University of St. Thomas – 1995

Master of Arts – Liturgical Studies – University of Notre Dame – 2004

Pastor – Catholic Community of St. Luke the Evangelist, Houston, TX

Chair – Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission

President– Southwest Liturgical Conference

Opening Prayer

Philippians 4:4-7

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians
Brothers and sisters: Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests know to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Opening Prayer

O God, who by your mighty power created all things out of nothing, and, when you had set in place the beginnings the universe, formed man and woman in your own image, making the woman an inseparable helpmate to the man, that they might no longer be two, but one flesh, and taught that what you were pleased to make one must never be divided... look with favor on your servants joined in holy matrimony. Send down on them the grace of the Holy Spirit and pour your love into their hearts, that they may remain faithful in the Marriage covenant.

(Adapted from the Nuptial Blessing *editio typica altera* # 74)

Preparation vs. Process

Present Rite of Marriage ¹⁹⁶⁹

In the present Rite of Marriage there are a total of five paragraphs in the General Introduction regarding marriage preparation.

In the new Rite of Marriage most recently adopted by the US bishops and now being sent to the Vatican for *recognitio* there are 11 plus another 16 addressing the minister and their roles in the process

Present Rite of Marriage 1969

General Introduction

- * 1 Married Christians, in virtue of the sacrament of matrimony, signify and share in the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and his Church; they help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of children; and they have their own special gift among the people of God.

Present Rite of Marriage 1969

- * 2 Marriage arises in the covenant of marriage, or irrevocable consent, which each partner freely bestows on and accepts from the other. This intimate union and the good of the children impose total fidelity on each of them and argue for an unbreakable oneness between them. Christ the Lord raised this union to the dignity of a sacrament so that it might more clearly recall and more easily reflect his own unbreakable union with his Church.

Present Rite of Marriage 1969

- * 3 Christian couples, therefore, nourish and develop their marriage by undivided affection, which wells up from the fountain of divine love, while, in a merging of human and divine love, they remain faithful in body and in mind, in good times as in bad.

Present Rite of Marriage 1969

- * 4 By their very nature, the institution of matrimony and wedded love are ordained for the procreation and education of children and find in them their ultimate crown...

Present Rite of Marriage 1969

- * 5 A priest should bear in mind these principles of faith, both in his instructions to those about to be married and when giving the homily during the marriage ceremony...

Present Rite of Marriage 1969

- * 5 ... The bridal couple should be given a review of the fundamentals of Christian doctrine. This may include instruction on the teachings about marriage and the family, on the rites used in the celebration of the sacrament itself, and on the prayers and readings...

Preparation

- * I have questions about wedding!
 - It is important to answer questions about the wedding upfront with published parish guidelines that deal with the details of the wedding (dress issues, art and environment in the church, music/ritual requirements, documentation needed, etc.)

Preparation

- * Apart from the documentation
 - Remember that we are more concerned with the marriage than the ritual in the beginning therefore the preparation focuses on discernment, the couple's relationship, communication, etc.
 - This process should take some time so that the couple has time to discuss and process the information.

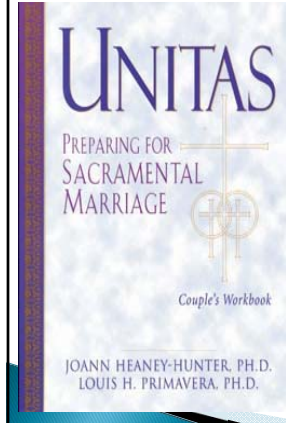
What is out there to help?...

FOCCUS www.foccusinc.com

Facilitate Open, Caring Communication, Understanding and Study.

(New edition coming in January 2014)

user-friendly, couple-centered inventory designed for lay individuals and professionals
aid to preparing couples for marriage
emphasize a facilitation process rather than counseling
address issues important for engaged couples to discuss and understand
adjusted over time to continue to address developing issues *(such as dual career marriage, cohabiting couples entering marriage in 1997 and challenges to shared spirituality in 2000)*



The Tasks of Unitas are Threefold:

- *To help couples build faith and spirituality in their relationship.
- *To help couples develop an understanding of areas such as communication, family of origin, conscience development, intimacy building, and family formation.
- *To help couples establish ties with their Church community. We hope that couples will ponder the things we share with them and draw on these resources long after the process is over.

For Better and For Ever - Marriage Preparation

By: Rev Robert Ruhnke (Sponsor Couples)

For Better and For Ever, a marriage preparation program for churches, marriage educators &/or for couples to use on their own. Workbook covers: Family of Origin, Finances, Spirituality, Cohabitation, Mixed Faiths, Blended Families, etc. Dating couples can use it to judge their readiness for lifelong marriage. Engaged use it to prepare for sessions with Pastor, or Sponsor/Mentor couples.

Catholic Edition - English, Spanish, Vietnamese

Christian Edition in English, Covenant (Secular) Edition in English. French edition due in 2011. Check Website for Training dates or to order DVD/Video mentor program - **no training required. Free On-line assistance to individuals/couples.**

Website: <http://www.marriagepreparation.com>;

email: marriage@marriagepreparation.com : Phone 210-534-1129

www.prepare-enrich.com

PREPARE/ENRICH is the leading relationship inventory and skill-building program used nationally and internationally. It is built on a solid research foundation and significantly improves a couple's relationship.

PREPARE/ENRICH is custom tailored to a couple's relationship and provides couple exercises to build their relationship skills.



A WEDDING IS A DAY
A MARRIAGE IS A LIFETIME

Catholic Engaged Encounter is an in-depth, private, personal, marriage preparation experience within the context of Catholic faith and values. Catholic Engaged Encounter is a weekend retreat away with other engaged couples with plenty of time alone together to dialogue honestly and intensively about their prospective lives together-- their strengths and weaknesses, desires, ambitions, goals, their attitudes about money, sex, children, family, their role in the church and society--in a face to face way. The weekend is open to any engaged couple wanting to prepare for a deeper, more meaningful life together in a marriage recognized by the Catholic Church according to its Church law.



Fully Engaged is a premarital inventory that was designed by the Diocese of Saint Cloud to help engaged couples solidify the foundation upon which they, together with Christ, will build their Sacrament of Marriage. We offer high-quality, affordable Catholic catechetical materials and training to accomplish this in both english and spanish.

The program invites engaged couples to become:

- more familiar with the richness of the Catholic tradition on marriage
- more aware of their strengths and areas of needed growth
- more involved in parish life
- more committed to Christ and one another

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<http://omf.stcdio.org/marriage-ministries/fully-engaged/>

**For the most part –
we do pretty good
with preparation**



**What about the
celebration of the Rite?**

Present Rite

#19 – At the appointed time, the priest, vested for Mass, goes with the ministers to the door of the church, or, if more suitable, to the altar. There he greets the bride and bridegroom in a friendly manner, showing that the Church shares their joy

Where it is desirable that the rite of welcome be omitted, the celebration of marriage begins at once with Mass.

Present Rite

20 If there is a procession to the altar, the ministers go first, followed by the priest, and then the bride and bridegroom. According to local custom, they may be escorted by at least their parents

If there is a procession?

The procession is the hardest part of the wedding. If you can get them from the front door of the church to the altar... downhill from there.

Present Rite

SO THEN WHAT?

Do we have a liturgical procession?

WHY DOES
THERE NEED
TO BE A
PROCESSION?

WHY CAN'T MY
SECOND COUSIN WHO
IS NOT CATHOLIC AND
DOES NOT GO TO
CHURCH PROCLAIM
THE READING?

WHY CAN'T FATHER
PRESIDE AT MY
WEDDING?

WHO IS IN THE
LITURGICAL
PROCESSION?

Do we have to have
music?

Do we have to
have Mass?

Why can't I use
poinsettias on the
second week of
Advent?

Rite of Marriage

Weddings are liturgical rites of the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore they should look like liturgical celebrations of the Roman Catholic Church.

Rite of Marriage

Cultural Adaptations... (New Rite, "It should be carefully and prudently considered what elements from the traditions and culture of particular peoples may appropriately be adopted" #41.7)

- * What is the culture? * Are the requests honest?
- * Does the couple believe in the requests?
(Who wants the adaptation, the couple or the relatives?)
- * Question of devotions (flowers to the Blessed Mother, etc.)
- * UNITY CANDLE, Arras, lazzo, jumping the broom, etc.

Revised Rite of Marriage

Timeline

- 1969 *editio typica*
- 1969 USA publishes translation
- 1990 *editio typica altera* promulgated, published in 1991
- 2008 Spanish translation of *editio typica altera* for USA, published 2010
- 2013 USCCB will considered grey book at their November meeting – *passed*.
- 2014 (or 2015) Implementation
including a gradual introduction for catechesis, perhaps not a formal implementation date?

What's New in the *Editio Typica Altera?*

An expanded praenotanda (General Introduction)

- * paragraph one becomes paragraph 8
- * more theology of Marriage included

What's New in the *Editio Typica Altera?*

Appendices

- * Blessing of Engaged Couple
- * Sample formulas for intercessions
- * Blessing of Married Couples with renewal of commitment (more *berahah* style prayer than vows; renewal of vows is optional; thanksgiving for married love)

What's New in the *Editio Typica Altera?*

Blessing of Married Couples

Example:

*Blessed are you, Lord,
for by your goodness I took N. as my wife.*

Blessed are you, Lord, for in the good and bad times of our life you have stood lovingly by our side. Helps us, we pray, to remain faithful in our love for one another, so that we may be true witnesses to the covenant you have made with humankind.

What's New in the *Editio Typica Altera?*

Within the Rite

- * Makes the wedding look more like a Catholic liturgy. (No provision for a bride-only procession. Important to keep emphasis on the liturgical assembly. The rite should look like a Catholic liturgy.)
- * Options for the opening address
- * Penitential Act is omitted
- * Use of Gloria for ritual Masses

What's New in the *Editio Typica Altera?*

*Placement of Nuptial Blessing (within Mass)
remains in the same place as it is presently

Outside Mass (without holy communion)

* ... vows and rings, followed by Universal Prayer, Lord's Prayer, Nuptial Blessing, Final Blessing

Outside Mass (with holy communion)

* ... vows and rings, Universal Prayer, Nuptial Blessing, Lord's Prayer, sign of peace, Holy Communion, Final prayer, Final blessing

What's New in the *Editio Typica Altera?*

Litany of the Saints

* Found in most Latin American editions and Italian edition

* Similar to Rite of Baptism for Children – before Baptism

* USA edition looks like will be placed after homily; will list married saints.

What's New in the *Editio Typica Altera?*

Cultural Adaptations

* USA English translation will include arras (coins) and lasso or veil in an appendix

* Jumping the broom, crowning, breaking glass, etc. did not make it in

The primary symbol is the couple themselves

Pastoral Questions

Is the support of the parish community evident?

Are the sponsor couples present?

Are there liturgical aids for the celebration?

Are there parish ministers beyond musicians (hospitality, extra-ordinary ministers of holy communion, lectors, etc)

Mystagogy – *After Care*

Is there any sort of follow up with the couple after they are married?

Does the parish offer on-going formation for married couples throughout the year?

Mystagogy – *After Care*

NEW RESOURCE – from the USCCB

www.foryourmarriage.org



QUESTIONS and Answers

Rev. James Burkart, Pastor
St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church
www.stlukesatholic.com