

Marriage as a Sacrament

The Catechism of the Catholic Church on Marriage
(CCC 1621-1654)

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Outline: The celebration and the definition

The Keywords

1. Sacrament
2. Covenant
3. Self-Donation

Matrimonial consent/Seal/Conjugal love/Fidelity/Prayer/Work

Sacrament

- Visible sign of inward grace ...
- Saint Leo the Great said that all that Christ lived and did has passed on to us through the Sacraments. ... All that was visible about Christ has come to us through the Sacraments.

Baptism

- The sacrament takes away all sins, makes you a member of the Church. You become a part of the body of Christ, the Church.
- Not a magic
- A seed to nurture and cultivate

The celebration of the sacrament of matrimony takes place where?

- 1621 In the Latin Rite the celebration of marriage between two Catholic faithful **normally takes place during Holy Mass**, because of the connection of all the sacraments with **the Paschal mystery of Christ**.¹²⁰ *In the Eucharist the memorial of the New Covenant is realized, the New Covenant in which Christ has united himself for ever to the Church, his beloved bride for whom he gave himself up.*¹²¹ It is therefore fitting that the spouses should **seal their consent** to give themselves to each other through the offering of their own lives *by uniting it to the offering of Christ for his Church made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and by receiving the Eucharist so that, communicating in the same Body and the same Blood of Christ, they may form but "one body" in Christ.*

... prepare themselves

- 1622 "Inasmuch as it is **a sacramental action of sanctification**, the liturgical celebration of marriage . . . must be, per se, valid, worthy, and fruitful."¹²³ It is therefore appropriate for *the bride and groom to prepare themselves for the celebration of their marriage by receiving the sacrament of penance.*

Who are the ministers of this sacrament?

- 1623 In the Latin Church, it is ordinarily understood that **the spouses**, as **ministers of Christ's grace**, **mutually confer upon each other the sacrament of Matrimony by expressing their consent before the Church**. In the Eastern liturgies the minister of this sacrament (which is called "Crowning") is the priest or bishop who, after receiving the mutual consent of the spouses, successively crowns the bridegroom and the bride as a sign of the marriage covenant.

... the seal and ever available source of their love and the strength ...

- 1624 The various liturgies abound in prayers of blessing and epiclesis asking God's grace and blessing on the new couple, especially the bride. In **the epiclesis of this sacrament** the spouses receive the Holy Spirit as the communion of love of Christ and the Church.
- **The Holy Spirit is the seal of their covenant,**
- *the ever available source of their love and the strength to renew their fidelity.*

Matrimonial consent

- 1625 The parties to a marriage covenant are a **baptized** man and woman, free to contract marriage, who **freely express their consent**.
- I ... take you ... as my wedded wife ... till death do us part.
- I ... take you ... as my wedded husband ... till death do us part.

United totally, completely for life
one flesh, one mind, one life forever

