

# **A Marriage and Family Ceremony**

(A Twenty-five Minute Ceremony)

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## **A CALL TO CELEBRATION**

A wedding is the celebration of the miracle of love. In marriage we say not only "I love you today," but also, "I promise to love you tomorrow, the next day and always." In promising always, we promise each other time. Time to learn to love beyond the level of our instincts and inclinations, to love in stormy and in good.

We change because of these promises. We shape ourselves according to them, we love in their midst and live differently because of them. Because we know we are loved, we can step beyond our fears; because we have been chosen, we can rise above our insecurities. Marriage the bond makes us free, our souls are protected, our hearts have come home. This is the reason we are here. To celebrate the union of two people whose hearts have come home.

## **PRAYER**

(Optional) In happiness and joy we thank God for His blessing of love which we celebrate on this occasion. May \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ always rejoice in their love, graced by delight for their mutual affection. Fulfill every worthy wish of their hearts. Open their eyes to the beauty and mystery of the love they hold for each other. May they together embrace and nurture the promise of this moment so that all who know them will call them truly blessed. AMEN

**READING** (A reading may be inserted here)

## **ADDRESS**

Marriage brings two people together not only in the present, but in the presence of their past, of the lives they have led, the choices they have made, the lessons that have shaped and reshaped the chambers of their hearts. Therefore, when you doubt the relevance of your past, and, at times, you will, or you don't understand your future. Remember nothing we ever do in life is wasted or lost. Everything leading up to this moment was of value, everything taught you something, and was a step on the path that brought you here. Your love for each other extends beyond the sea, wind, earth, and flame. It is greater than who you are and meaningless without you. It is more powerful than your past and yet the foundation for your future. It has brought you to this moment to become one in the eyes of family and friends. Your love is the essence of your lives.

Therefore, remember to do the simple and beautiful things that will make this love a lasting one. Communicate with one another. Focus on your goals. Plan for the things that are important to you, and make sure you do them. This love is to be nurtured, to be lived out to the fullest in every aspect of its dreams, in the simple ceremonies of shared daily life, in realized hopes and long-deferred plans.

Finally, be thankful for one another. Love is always a gift. A great compliment is being paid to you when you receive each others love, another opportunity to love and to extend your circle of love to your family. Not everyone is given this opportunity; not everyone in life experiences the joy of loving and being loved.

## **CONSECRATION**

No other human ties are more tender; no other vows more sacred than these you now assume. The vows you are about to speak are a verbal representation of a much deeper commitment. May they be followed by loyalty and devotion.

\_\_\_\_\_, do you chose \_\_\_\_\_, to be your wedded wife/husband, to live together in the holy estate of marriage? Do you promise to love, honor and cherish from this day forward?

## **VOW AND RING CEREMONY**

Rings are objects of adornment, and while, in a single lifetime we have many objects of adornment, we have among them always the one that is most precious to us. May these rings, from this day forward, be your most treasured adornment, and may the love they symbolize be, to the end of your days, your most precious adornment.

\_\_\_\_\_, With love, I take you, to be my own beloved wife/husband, my dearest friend, my most treasured companion, to love you, hold you and honor you, to console and protect you, to mirror your highest values, to be patient and kind, to live with you and laugh with you, to give thanks for you always. This I promise you from my heart and with my soul, for all the days of my life. I give you this ring as a sign of my love.

## **UNITY HEART (Optional)**

As a symbol of their marriage covenant with each other; \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ will assemble the Unity Heart that they will display in their home and it will be a reminder of their wedding day. The outer form of the heart represents \_\_\_\_\_; his strength, leadership and many qualities that will equip him in his role as protector and provider of his wife and family. The inner form of the heart represents \_\_\_\_\_; she is designed with intricate care, beautifully detailed and is a reminder of the role she plays in the relationship as a wife dedicated to the care and protection of her family. Today they become one heart united in love that will stand the test of time. From this day forward, you will be to each other the joy and the comfort the other needs. You will be the listening heart to each other's deepest thoughts and most fragile feelings. You will be the inspiration for each other's most beautiful dreams. You will be each other's refuge of sheltering love at the end of the day. From this day forward you will be one heart and one soul.

## **I CARRY YOU IN MY HEART**

I carry you in my heart with me (I carry it in my heart) I am never without it (anywhere I go you go, my dear; and whatever is done by only me is your doing, my darling) I fear

No fate (for you are my fate, my sweet) I want no world (for beautiful you are my world, my true) and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant and whatever a sun will always sing is you

Here is the deepest secret nobody knows (here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows higher than the soul can hope or mind can hide) and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart" E. E. Cummings

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

Now that you, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, have promised to give yourselves to one another and to love each other, through your sacred vows and the giving and receiving of rings, I now pronounce you husband and wife. May you live together from this moment forward in blissful happiness.

You May Kiss! Mr. & Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

## **FAMILY CEREMONY**(Optional: Can be added to any ceremony choice!)

As we give thanks to God for the love of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ together, so, too, we recognize the merging of families taking place and the significant role their child/children [Insert names of child/children] play in this marriage today celebrated.

Children are gifts entrusted to you. Not as an object to be controlled, but as human beings, each unique in their own personality, each separate in their own identity. You may give them your love, but not your thoughts. For they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies, but not their souls. For they dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, even in your dreams. You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life doesn't go backwards, nor does it tarry with yesterday. You are the bow from which your children, as living arrows, are sent forth.

Do you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, promise before God, family and friends, to love and protect [name/names of child/children]?

Do you (child/children), promise to love and honor your parents?

## **PRAYER FOR THE FAMILY**(Optional)

We give thanks, O Lord, for the relationship here celebrated. In Your presence we are humbled by the recognition that, Today, we face a new future, one which love has unfolded And is unfolding before our very eyes. May we ever respect the sanctity of this gift.

## **INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY**(Optional)

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ In their new relationship as husband and wife and their child/children, [name/names of child/children] Celebrated their new family on [Month/Date/Year] At [Location]

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