THE ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY
MUSIC GUIDELINES
2018

Diocese of Toledo
It is the faith of the Church that when two Christians marry something sacred takes place. The man and woman who commit themselves to one another celebrate a sacrament. Their marriage is a revelation of Christ’s love for His Church. The love of man and woman is made holy in the sacrament of marriage and becomes a mirror of God’s everlasting love for the world.

Thus, the celebration of Christian marriage is not just the “couple’s day.” It is the day of the Church. The People of God gather to witness the exchange of vows, and to express their support, joy and faith through prayers, acclamations and song.

“How wonderful the bond of the two believers: one in hope, one in vow, one in discipline, one in the same service! They are both children of one Father and servants of the same Master, with no separation of spirit and flesh. Indeed, they are two in one flesh; where there is one flesh, there is also one spirit” (Pope St. John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio).

May every celebration of Matrimony be a reflection of the source of love that has brought the couple to this day. May it be a reminder of God’s love for their family and friends who have gathered to witness with joy and prayer their commitment to one another in Christ.
Since the wedding liturgy is a celebration of a sacrament, the music must reflect that sacramental nature. The same general principals of planning worship and selecting music are employed as for other liturgies.

The music should be chosen with the utmost care and consideration for the sacredness of the liturgy. It needs to be expressive of Christian faith and values. Music which only celebrates the human secular values of love is not appropriate for a liturgical celebration. The assembly gathered for the wedding should be drawn into active participation in this sacred ritual through prayer and song in order to share fully in the sacramental encounter with Christ the Lord.

Sometimes the only music familiar to the couple consists of songs heard in the context of secular culture: movies, television, playlists, the internet, etc. This music is not suited to the celebration of the sacrament. Texts should reflect the nature of the ceremony in which one man is bound to one woman in love; as well as the love of God for the couple and for all people. It is the responsibility of the pastor and the parish musicians to explain pastorally and charitably why secular music is not appropriate to the sacred liturgy. The parish musician will make every effort to offer a wide range of sacred music for the couple to consider.

Planning for a wedding liturgy should begin with reflection on the Scripture readings to be used for the occasion. Music should be evaluated according to the principles outlined in *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*, #126-136 listed below.

**LITURGICAL JUDGMENT**
- Is this composition capable of meeting the structural and textual requirements set forth by the liturgical books for this particular rite (#127)?
- What parts are preferred for singing and who sings them?

**PASTORAL JUDGMENT**
- Will this composition draw this particular people closer to the mystery of Christ, which is at the heart of this liturgical celebration (#133)?

**MUSICAL JUDGMENT**
- Is the music technically, aesthetically, and expressively worthy?
- Will it be effective with the instrumental and vocal resources available?
- Sufficiency of artistic expression, however, is not the same as musical style, for “the Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her own” (#136).
### Order of Celebrating Matrimony: Music Guidelines

#### Order of Celebrating Matrimony Within Mass

**Prelude Music**

**Introductory Rites**
- Procession
- Entrance Chant (If not sung during the procession)
  - Greeting
  - Gloria
  - Collect

**Liturgy of the Word**
- Old Testament Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- New Testament Reading
- Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)
  - Gospel
  - Homily

**Celebration of Matrimony**
- Exchange of Vows
- Acclamation
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Hymn or Canticle of Praise
- Universal Prayer

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**
- Preparation of the Gifts
- Eucharistic Prayer and Acclamations
  - Lord’s Prayer
  - Nuptial Blessing
  - Sign of Peace
  - Lamb of God
  - Communion
- Prayer after Communion

**Concluding Rite**
- Final Blessing
- Recessional

#### Order of Celebrating Matrimony Without Mass

**Prelude Music**

**Introductory Rites**
- Procession
- Greeting
- Collect

**Liturgy of the Word**
- Old Testament Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- New Testament Reading
- Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)
  - Gospel
  - Homily

**Celebration of Matrimony**
- Exchange of Vows
- Acclamation
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Hymn or Canticle of Praise
- Universal Prayer
- Nuptial Blessing

**Concluding Rite**
- Final Blessing
- Recessional
PRELUDE MUSIC
Prelude music draws the assembly into an attitude of prayer in order to experience more fully the sacred nature of the sacrament to be celebrated. Instrumental and vocal music would best serve in this capacity.

PROCESSIONAL
First Form (OCM #45-47, #80-82)
After the celebrant receives the bridal party at the door of the church the “procession to the altar takes place in the customary manner. Meanwhile, the Entrance Chant takes place” (OCM; see also GIRM, #120). Approaching the altar, the celebrant reverences it and goes to the chair. After the Sign of the Cross he greets all present.

Second Form (OCM #48-50, #83-85)
The celebrant receives the couple when they have arrived at their place, typically following a procession of the bridal party. Within Mass, the Entrance Chant takes place as the priest reverences the altar and goes to the chair. After the Sign of the Cross the celebrant greets all present.

GLORIA
When the Marriage Rite takes place within Mass the Gloria is sung following the greeting. A responsorial style setting might be used when many guests are not members of the local parish. The parish Director of Music should assist the couple in selecting a musical setting that will encourage participation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD: RESPONSORIAL PSALM
“After the First Reading follows the Responsorial Psalm, which is an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word and which has great liturgical and pastoral importance, since it fosters meditation on the Word of God” (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #61). It is selected from the appointed psalms in the Order of Celebrating Matrimony or the Lectionary. The Responsorial Psalm is sung by a cantor with the assembly taking part by means of a response.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION
This acclamation announces the proclamation of the Gospel and is always to be sung or omitted if not sung. The acclamation should be appropriate to the liturgical season. During the Lenten season, the Alleluia is replaced by an appointed acclamation found in the Lectionary.

CELEBRATION OF MATRIMONY
The Celebration of Matrimony consists of The Questions before the Consent, The Consent, and the Blessing and Giving of Rings. After the Reception of Consent the celebrant invites those present to praise God with the dialog “Let us bless the Lord” – “Thanks be to God” or another acclamation. This can be sung or said. If sung, it should be brief and simple so as not to eclipse other elements of the Rite.

Following the Rite, a Hymn of Praise or Canticle may be sung by the assembly. A vocal solo is not appropriate here.

If culturally appropriate, the Order of Celebrating Matrimony includes the presentation of Arras and the Lazo.
LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST
(Celebration of Matrimony Within Mass only)

Vocal or instrumental music accompanies the Preparation of the Gifts and Offertory Procession and should be carefully planned to fit within the time required for the ritual to take place.

The Eucharistic Acclamations (Holy, Holy, Holy; Mystery of Faith and Amen) are always to be sung by the entire assembly. The parish Director of Music should assist the couple in selecting a musical setting that will encourage participation.

The Lord’s Prayer is prayed by the assembly and is the common prayer of all Christian people. It may be recited or sung. If it is sung, a familiar setting, such as the traditional chant melody, should be chosen so that all present may join in the prayer.

The Sign of Peace, as a symbolic action, should be extended only to those who are nearest. This should not be a time for the couple to greet family members and the wedding party. Music is not required or appropriate at this point. But, if circumstances require, instrumental music that leads into the Lamb of God may be appropriate.

The Lamb of God is a litany which accompanies the Breaking of the Bread, should be sung by the assembly alone or in alternation with the cantor.

The Communion Rite is the “coming together as one” to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Music at this point unites the assembly spiritually while also serving to accompany the procession. A responsorial setting may best serve as the assembly joins in singing the refrain of a familiar hymn or chant while the cantor sings the verses. An instrumental or vocal solo may be an option at this time, if it is in keeping with the sacrament, the scripture, or the liturgical season.

RECESSIONAL
As all are departing the church, instrumental music expresses the joy and festivity of the occasion.
Other Liturgical Considerations

Great importance is attached to the singing of the assembly. In selecting music, “due consideration for the culture of the people” (GIRM, #39) should be given. Music should “reflect the multicultural diversity and intercultural relationships of the members of the gathered liturgical assembly” (Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, #60).

“It is the policy of the Diocese of Toledo not to include any element not foreseen by the ritual text, such as the lighting of the “unity candle,” the mixing of colored sand, the pouring of colored water, or the use of a “unity cross” (Letter to Priests, Deacons and Pastoral Leaders from Bishop Thomas, September 2016). These extraneous practices dilute, rather than strengthen, the powerful symbols already present in the rite: the spoken consent of the couple, the giving of rings and the Nupital Blessing.

If a Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is desired it would most appropriately take place after the Final Blessing and before the Recessional music.

WORSHIP AIDS AND COPYRIGHTS

Some couples choose to have a worship aid printed to be used at the wedding ceremony. If properly prepared, a worship aid encourages active participation in the spoken and sung prayers of the liturgy and helps those who are unfamiliar with the Catholic liturgy to understand its basic structure. A worship aid also provides a thoughtful memento of the occasion.

When preparing the worship aid:

- Avoid printing too much, as the worship aid may then become confusing. Do not print the texts of prayers, readings, or vows. These should be listened to, not read by the assembly. Print major headings in bold or decorative type so they stand out. A smaller print may be used for the elements of each rite under the major headings (see page 4 of these Guidelines for an example).
- The Order of Matrimony is to be printed first, since this is the most important part. Avoid printing the names of any ministers within the Order of Matrimony. The list of ministers, such as members of the wedding party, readers, musicians, and family, is printed on the last page.
- An invitation might also be placed at the very beginning of the worship aid inviting the assembly to join in the sung and spoken prayer of the wedding ceremony.
- To encourage everyone to sing, print both the words and the music of hymns, refrains, and acclamations.
- Any time music and/or words to hymns are printed, copyright permission needs to be secured. Permission to reprint music from the major Catholic publishers can be secured through OneLicense.com. The parish musician should be able to assist couple with the copyright permission process.
- The inclusion of Guidelines for the Reception of Holy Communion should be included if the celebration is within Mass.
- It is recommended that the parish musician or some other knowledgeable person proofread the program before it is printed. This will help avoid any mistakes.
USE OF RECORDED MUSIC
“Recorded music lacks the authenticity provided by a living liturgical assembly gathered for the Sacred Liturgy. It should not, as a general norm, be used within the Liturgy” (Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, # 93).

WEDDINGS DURING LENT
If, for pastoral reasons, a wedding celebration takes place during Lent, the music should be in keeping with the nature of the liturgical season. Care should be taken that the “Alleluia” is not included anywhere in the liturgy, including the Gospel Acclamation.

Parishes should develop clear policies for the Celebration of Matrimony that includes the role of parish musicians, music selection, liturgical planning and other issues related to the celebration. Parishes are responsible for establishing musicians’ fees and terms of payment.

Engaged couples should be strongly encouraged to employ musicians from the parish where they will be married. “The Celebration of Matrimony displays a communitarian character that encourages the participation also of the parish community at least through some of its members” (OCM #28).

Parish musicians have the benefit of knowing what is most appropriate and effective for the local worshipping community. They are familiar with the musical instruments in the church, the sound system and acoustical environment. Parish musicians are accustomed to the practice and style of the parish priests and deacons who preside at weddings. Couples should also consider that wedding fees often supplement the salary of parish musicians.

If guest musicians are chosen to provide music it is prudent policy to include parish musicians in the music planning process for the reasons stated above. It would be appropriate for the couple to offer a stipend to the parish musician for any consultation with the engaged couple, time spent welcoming and orienting guest musicians, and any other incidental tasks they may perform in preparation for the wedding.

Parish musicians should be contacted before any decisions concerning music are made. Early consultation allows ample preparation time for all concerned.
ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY WITHIN MASS

Bride __________________________________________________ Phone/email _____________________
Groom ________________________________________________   Phone/email _____________________
Date and Time of Wedding _________________________________________________________________
Celebrant__________________________________
Organist __________________________________
Cantor ___________________________________  Other________________________________________

PRELUDE MUSIC
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

INTRODUCTORY RITES
Processional  __________________________________________________________
Entrance Chant ________________________________________________________

LITURGY OF THE WORD
First Reading ______________________________________________________________
Responsorial Psalm _________________________________________________________
Second Reading ____________________________________________________________
Alleluia (or Lenten Acclamation)_______________________________________________
Gospel ___________________________________________________________________
Homily

Celebration of Matrimony
The Consent
Reception of Consent and Acclamation: (Let us bless the Lord.  Thanks be to God.)
Blessing and Giving of Rings
Hymn or Canticle of Praise (optional) _____________________________________________
Universal Prayer

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST
Presentation of the Gifts _______________________________________________________
Holy, Holy, Holy _____________________________________________________
Mystery of Faith _____________________________________________________
Amen _____________________________________________________________

The Lord’s Prayer __________________________________________________________
Nuptial Blessing

Lamb of God ______________________________________________________________

Communion Hymn _________________________________________________________
Prayer After Communion

CONCLUDING RITES
Final Blessing
Recessional _______________________________________________________________
ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY WITHOUT MASS

Bride __________________________________________________ Phone/email _____________________
Groom ________________________________________________   Phone/email _____________________
Date and Time of Wedding _________________________________________________________________
Celebrant ____________________________________________
Organist _________________________________
Cantor ___________________________________  Other________________________________

PRELUDE MUSIC
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

INTRODUCTORY RITES
Processional _________________________________________________

LITURGY OF THE WORD
First Reading ______________________________________________________________
Responsorial Psalm _________________________________________________________
Second Reading ____________________________________________________________
Alleluia (or Lenten Acclamation)_______________________________________________
Gospel ___________________________________________________________________
Homily

Celebration of Matrimony

The Consent
Reception of Consent and Acclamation: (Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God.)
Blessing and Giving of Rings
Hymn or Canticle of Praise (optional) _____________________________________________
Universal Prayer
Nuptial Blessing

CONCLUDING RITES
Final Blessing
Recessional _________________________________________________________________
Entrance Chant  *(see General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #48)*

May the Lord send you help from the holy place (Roman Missal)

*Saint Meinrad: Entrance and Communion Antiphons for Sacraments and Parish Rituals,*
Columba Kelly, OSB; OCP Publications

*Lumen Christi Missal,* Adam Barlett, Illuminare Publications

There was a wedding at Cana (Simple Gradual)

*By Flowing Waters,* Paul Ford, The Liturgical Press

Joyful, Joyful We Adore You (tune: Hymn to Joy)
Love has Brought Us Here Together (GIA) (tune: Hyfrydol)
God, Who Created Hearts to Love (OCP) (tune: Lasst Uns ERFREUEN)
All the Earth: Psalm 100 (WLP) (Lucien Deiss)

Hymn or Canticle of Praise

*May be sung following the Exchange of Rings* *(OCM # 68)*

May the Grace of Christ Our Savior (tune: Stuttgart)
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling  (tune: Hyfrydol)
God of Love, Embrace Your People (GIA)  (tune: Hymn to Joy)

Communion Chant *(see General Instruction of the Roman Missal, # 87)*

Christ Loved the Church (Roman Missal)

*Saint Meinrad: Entrance and Communion Antiphons for Sacraments and Parish Rituals,*
Columba Kelly, OSB; OCP Publications

See what blessings will come (Simple Gradual)

*By Flowing Waters,* Paul Ford, The Liturgical Press

Taste and See (Psalm 34)  various composers
Ubi caritas  chant and various composers
God Is Love  Richard Proulx
Love One Another  James Chepponis

RESPONSORIAL PSALMS

*Respnsorial Psalms for the Order of Celebration Matrimony are found in the ritual book at #167-173. Musical settings can be found in hymnals and various psalm collections.*

- Psalm 33: The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.
- Psalm 34: Taste and see the goodness of the Lord or I will bless the Lord at all times
- Psalm 103: The Lord is kind and merciful
- Psalm 112: Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord’s commands
- Psalm 128: Blessed are those who fear the Lord.
- Psalm 145: How good is the Lord to all
- Psalm 148: Let all praise the name of the Lord.
### Music for Organ

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### Music for Piano

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verdi, Ralph</td>
<td>Wedding Song</td>
<td>GIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Composers</td>
<td>United As One, Vol. 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>OCP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In addition to the solo selections listed, there are hymns and songs found in hymnals that may serve well as vocal solos.*