III. ORDERS FOR THE BLESSING OF A MARRIED COUPLE

INTRODUCTION

90 A major wedding anniversary, for example, the 25th, 50th, or 60th, is a fitting occasion for a special remembrance of the sacrament of marriage by means of the celebration of the proper Mass and prayers provided in the Roman Missal.

91 The blessing of a married couple may be celebrated within Mass, by use of the orders of blessing provided in nos. 94-106 and 107-114, or by a blessing outside Mass, celebrated according to the orders given in nos. 115-131 and 132-134.

92 A married couple may also request a blessing at a time other than an anniversary for the special needs of their lives or for such occasions as retreats or pilgrimages. If several couples are to be blessed at the same time, the prayer of blessing and the final blessing are adapted accordingly.

93 While maintaining the structure and chief elements of the rite, the minister should adapt the celebration to the circumstances of the place and the married couple and the families involved.

A. ORDER OF BLESSING WITHIN MASS ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF MARRIAGE

94 Depending on the provisions of the rubrics, in the liturgy of the word the readings may be taken either from the lectionary of the Rite of Marriage or from the Lectionary for Mass, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, “In Thanksgiving.”

95 The homily follows the gospel reading. In it the celebrant, basing himself on the sacred text, gives an explanation of the grace and mystery of Christian married life pertinent to the life of the couple.

96 Then the celebrant invites the couple to pray in silence and to renew before God their sacred matrimonial commitment to each other.

97 The celebrant may say the following prayer and then incense the couple’s wedding rings.

Lord,
increase and consecrate the love
which N. and N. have for one another.
The wedding rings they once exchanged
are the sign of their fidelity.
May they continue to prosper
in the grace of the sacrament.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

98 Or if the couple renews the exchange of rings, the celebrant says the following prayer of blessing.

Lord,
bless and consecrate the love which N. and N. have for one another.
May these rings be a symbol
of their true faith in each other
and of the grace of the sacrament.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

99 One of the following formularies may also be used:

Lord,
bless these rings which we bless + in your name.
Grant that those who wear them
may always have a deep faith in each other.
May they continue to enjoy your peace and goodwill
and live together in love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.
or

Lord,
bless and consecrate the love which N. and N. have for one another.
May these rings be a symbol
of their true faith in each other
and always remind them of their love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

**GENERAL INTERCESSIONS**

100 The general intercessions follow, either in the form usual at Mass or in the form given here.
The celebrant says:
In the tender plan of his providence, God our almighty Father has given married love, its faithfulness, (and its fruitfulness,) a special significance in the history of salvation.
Let us therefore call upon him, saying:
R. Lord, renew in your servants their fidelity to each other.
or
R. Lord, hear our prayer.
Assisting minister:
Father all-holy, the faithful one, you ask for and respond to fidelity to your covenant; fill with your blessings your servants who are celebrating their (25th, 50th, 60th, other) wedding anniversary. (For this we pray:) R.
Assisting minister:
You live in eternity with the Son and the Holy Spirit in oneness of life and communion of love; grant that these your servants will be mindful of the covenant of love they pledged to each other through the sacrament of marriage and never fail in fidelity. (For this we pray:) R.
Assisting minister:
In your providence you have ordained that all genuinely human experiences should become ways of leading the faithful to share in the mystery of Christ; grant to your servants serenity in good times and bad and the will to stay close to Christ and to live for him alone. (For this we pray:) R.
Assisting minister:
It is your will that married life should be a lesson in Christian living; grant that all husbands and wives may be witnesses to the wonders of your Son's love. (For this we pray:) R.

101 The celebrant immediately adds the following or some other suitable prayer.
O God,
the life of the family is founded on the plan of your own providence.
In your mercy receive the prayers of your servants.
Grant that by imitating the Holy Family
they may reach the joys of your home
and together praise you for ever.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

102 In the liturgy of the eucharist the Order of Mass is observed, with the few modifications indicated.
As circumstances suggest, the husband and wife may bring the bread and wine to the altar for the presentation of the gifts.

**PRAYER OF BLESSING**

103 After the Lord's Prayer, and omitting the embolism *Deliver us*, the celebrant faces the couple and, with hands outstretched, says:
Lord God and Creator,
we bless and praise your name.
In the beginning you made man and woman,
so that they might enter a communion of life and love.
You likewise blessed the union of N. with N.,
so that they might reflect the union of Christ with his Church:
look with kindness on them today.
Amid the joys and struggles of their life
you have preserved the union between them;
renew their marriage covenant,
increase your love in them,
and strengthen their bond of peace,
so that (surrounded by their children)
they may always rejoice in the gift of your blessing.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

104 As circumstances suggest and in keeping with local custom, after the celebrant says: *The peace of the Lord be with you*, the husband and wife and all present may offer to each other some sign of peace
and love.
105 The couple may receive communion under both kinds.
106 At the end of Mass the celebrant blesses the couple, either in the usual manner or by using a more
solemn formulary, for example:
In the following or similar words, the assisting deacon invites those present to prepare for the blessing.
Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.
Then with hands outstretched over the couple, the celebrant says:
May God, the almighty Father, give you joy.
R. Amen.
May the only Son of God have mercy on you
and help you in good times and in bad.
R. Amen.
May the Holy Spirit
always fill your hearts with love.
R. Amen.
Then he blesses all present.
And may almighty God bless you all,
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.
R. Amen.

**B. ORDER OF BLESSING WITHIN MASS ON OTHER OCCASIONS**

107 Depending on the provisions of the rubrics, in the liturgy of the word the readings may be taken from
the Lectionary for Mass, from either Ritual Masses, “Wedding Mass” or the Masses for Various Needs and
Occasions, “In Thanksgiving.”
108 The homily follows the gospel reading. In it the celebrant, basing himself on the sacred text, gives an
explanation of the grace and mystery of Christian married life pertinent to the life
of the couple.
109 Then the celebrant invites the couple to pray in silence and to renew before God their sacred
matrimonial commitment to each other.

**GENERAL INTERCESSIONS**

110 The general intercessions follow, either in the form usual at Mass or in the form given here.
The celebrant says:
In the tender plan of his providence, God our almighty Father has given married love,
its faithfulness, (and its fruitfulness,) a special significance in the history of salvation.
Let us therefore call upon him, saying:
R. Lord, renew in your servants their fidelity to each other.
or
R. Lord, hear our prayer.
Assisting minister:
Father all-holy, you have made marriage the great symbol of Christ's love for his
Church; bestow on these your servants the fullness of your own love. (For this we
pray:) R.
Assisting minister:
You live in eternity with the Son and the Holy Spirit in oneness of life and communion of love; grant that these your servants will be mindful of the covenant of love they pledged to each other through the sacrament of marriage and never fail in fidelity. (For this we pray:) R.

**Assisting minister:**

In your providence you have ordained that all genuinely human experiences should become ways of leading the faithful to share in the mystery of Christ; grant to your servants serenity in good times and bad and the will to stay close to Christ and to live for him alone. (For this we pray:) R.

**Assisting minister:**

It is your will that married life should be a lesson in Christian living; grant that all husbands and wives may be witnesses to the wonders of your Son's love. (For this we pray:) R.

**PRAYER OF BLESSING**

111 With hands outstretched, the celebrant concludes the intercessions by saying:

Almighty and eternal God,
you have so exalted the unbreakable bond of marriage
that it has become the sacramental sign
of your Son's union with the Church as his spouse.

Look with favour on N. and N.,
whom you have united in marriage,
as they ask for your help
and the protection of the Virgin Mary.
They pray that in good times and in bad
they will grow in love for each other;
that they will resolve to be of one heart
in the bond of peace.

Lord, in their struggles let them rejoice
that you are near to help them;
in their needs let them know
that you are there to rescue them;
in their joys let them see
that you are the source and completion of every happiness.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

112 In the liturgy of the eucharist the Order of Mass is observed, with the few modifications indicated.

As circumstances suggest, the husband and wife may bring the bread and wine to the altar for the presentation of the gifts.

113 As circumstances suggest and in keeping with local custom, after the celebrant says: The peace of the Lord be with you, the husband and wife and all present may offer to each other some sign of peace and love.

114 At the end of Mass the celebrant blesses the couple, either in the usual manner, or by using a more solemn formulary, for example:

In the following or similar words, the assisting deacon invites those present to prepare for the blessing.

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.
Then with hands outstretched over the couple, the celebrant says:

May God, the almighty Father, give you joy.
R. Amen.

May the only Son of God have mercy on you
and help you in good times and in bad.
R. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit
always fill your hearts with love.
R. Amen.
Then he blesses all present.
And may almighty God bless you all,
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.
R. Amen.

C. ORDER OF BLESSING OUTSIDE MASS
115 The present order may be used by a priest or deacon. It may also be used by a layperson, who
follows the rites and prayers designated for a lay minister.
116 While maintaining the structure and chief elements of the rite, the minister should adapt the
celebration to the circumstances of the place and the couple involved.
Whenever a couple is to receive a blessing without the participation of a community of the faithful, the
minister may use the shorter rite provided in nos. 132-134.

INTRODUCTORY RITES
117 When the community has gathered, Psalm 33 or some other suitable song may be sung. After the
singing, the minister says:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
All make the sign of the cross and reply:
Amen.
118 A minister who is a priest or deacon greets those present in the following or other suitable words,
taken mainly from sacred Scripture.
The grace and peace of God our Father, who exalted the marriage bond and made it
the sign of Christ and his Church, be with you all.
All make the following or some other suitable reply.
And also with you.
119 A lay minister greets those present in the following words.
Blessed be the God of all consolation, who has shown us his great mercy. Blessed be
God now and for ever.
R. Amen.
120 In the following or similar words, which should always be adapted to suit the particular occasion, the
minister prepares the couple and all present for the blessing.
We have come together to celebrate the anniversary of the marriage of our brother
and sister. As we join them in their joy, we join them also in their gratitude. God has
set them among us as a sign of his love and through the years they have remained
faithful (and have fulfilled their responsibilities as parents). Let us give thanks for all the
favours N. and N. have received during their married life. May God keep them in their
love for each other, so that they may be more and more of one mind and one heart.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD
121 A reader or another person present reads a text of sacred Scripture, taken preferably from the texts
provided in the Rite of Marriage and the Lectionary for Mass The readings chosen should be those that
best apply to the life of the couple.
1 Corinthians:1:4-9 – I never stop thanking God because of the grace of God which was given you.
122 As circumstances suggest, the following responsorial psalm may be sung or said, or some other
suitable song.
Psalm 127 – R. Happy are those who fear the Lord.
123 As circumstances suggest, the minister may give those present a brief explanation of the biblical text
and of the grace and mystery of Christian married life, so that they may understand through faith the
meaning of the celebration.
Then the minister invites the couple to pray in silence and to renew before God their sacred matrimonial
commitment to each other.
124 On a wedding anniversary the minister may say the following prayer and then incense the couple’s
wedding rings.
Lord,
increase and consecrate the love
which N. and N. have for one another.
The wedding rings they once exchanged
are the sign of their fidelity.
May they continue to prosper
in the grace of the sacrament.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

125 Or, if the couple renews the exchange of rings, the minister says the following prayer of blessing.

Lord,
bless and consecrate the love
which N. and N. have for one another.
May these rings be a symbol
of their true faith in each other
and of the grace of the sacrament.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

126 A minister who is a priest or a deacon may also use one of the following formularies.

Lord,
bless these rings which we bless + in your name.
Grant that those who wear them
may always have a deep faith in each other.
May they continue to enjoy your peace and goodwill
and live together in love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

or

Lord,
bless + and consecrate the love
which N. and N. have for one another.
May these rings be a symbol
of their true faith in each other
and always remind them of their love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS

127 The intercessions are then said. The minister introduces them and an assisting minister or one of those present announces the intentions. From the following intentions those best suited to the occasion may be used or adapted, or other intentions that apply to the particular circumstances may be composed.

The minister says:

In the tender plan of his providence, God our almighty Father has given married love, its faithfulness, (and its fruitfulness,) a special significance in the history of salvation.
Let us therefore call upon him, saying:
R. Lord, renew in your servants their fidelity to each other.

or

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Assisting minister:

Father all-holy, you have made marriage the great symbol of Christ's love for his Church; bestow on these your servants the fullness of your own love. (For this we pray:) R.

On the 25th, 50th, 60th, or other wedding anniversary
Assisting minister:
Father all-holy, the faithful one, you ask for and respond to fidelity to your covenant; fill with your blessings your servants who are celebrating their (25th, 50th, 60th, other) wedding anniversary. (For this we pray:) R.

Assisting minister:
You live in eternity with the Son and the Holy Spirit in oneness of life and communion of love; grant that these your servants will be mindful of the covenant of love they pledged to each other through the sacrament of marriage and never fail in fidelity. (For this we pray:) R.

Assisting minister:
In your providence you have ordained that all genuinely human experiences should become ways of leading the faithful to share in the mystery of Christ; grant to your servants serenity in good times and bad and the will to stay close to Christ and to live for him alone. (For this we pray:) R.

Assisting minister:
It is your will that married life should be a lesson in Christian living; grant that all husbands and wives may be witnesses to the wonders of your Son's love. (For this we pray:) R.

**PRAYER OF BLESSING**

**A**

On the 25th, 50th, 60th, or other anniversary

Lord God and Creator,
we bless and praise your name.
In the beginning you made man and woman,
so that they might enter a communion of life and love.
You likewise blessed the union of N. with N.,
so that they might reflect the union of Christ with his Church:
look with kindness on them today.
Amid the joys and struggles of their life
you have preserved the union between them;
renew their marriage covenant,
increase your love in them,
and strengthen their bond of peace,
so that (surrounded by their children)
they may always rejoice in the gift of your blessing.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

**B**

On other occasions

Almighty and eternal God,
you have so exalted the unbreakable bond of marriage
that it has become the sacramental sign
of your Son's union with the Church as his spouse.
Look with favour on N. and N., whom you have united in marriage,
as they ask for your help
and the protection of the Virgin Mary.
They pray that in good times and in bad
they will grow in love for each other;
that they will resolve to be of one heart
in the bond of peace.
Lord, in their struggles let them rejoice
that you are near to help them;
in their needs let them know
that you are there to rescue them;
in their joys let them see
that you are the source and completion of every happiness.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE
129 A minister who is a priest or deacon concludes the rite by first blessing the couple and saying, with 
hands outstretched toward them:
May God, the almighty Father, give you joy.
R. Amen.
May the only Son of God have mercy on you and help you in good times and in bad.
R. Amen.
May the Holy Spirit
always fill your hearts with love.
R. Amen.
Then he blesses all present.
And may almighty God bless you all,
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.
R. Amen.
130 A lay minister concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:
May the God of hope fill you with every joy in believing.
May the peace of Christ abound in your hearts.
May the Holy Spirit enrich you with his gifts, now and for ever.
R. Amen.
131 It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.

D. SHORTER RITE
132 The minister says:
Our help is in the name of the Lord.
All reply:
Who made heaven and earth.
133 One of those present or the minister reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example: Mark 10:8-9
134 A minister who is a priest or deacon says the appropriate prayer of blessing with hands outstretched;
a lay minister says the prayer with hands joined.

A
On the 25th, 50th, 60th, or other anniversary
Lord God and Creator,
we bless and praise your name.
In the beginning you made man and woman,
so that they might enter a communion of life and love.
You likewise blessed the union of N. with N.,
so that they might reflect the union of Christ with his Church:
look with kindness on them today.
Amid the joys and struggles of their life
you have preserved the union between them;
renew their marriage covenant,
increase your love in them,
and strengthen their bond of peace,
so that (surrounded by their children)
they may always rejoice in the gift of your blessing.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

On other occasions
Almighty and eternal God,
you have so exalted the unbreakable bond of marriage
that it has become the sacramental sign
of your Son's union with the Church as his spouse.
Look with favour on N. and N., whom you have united in marriage,
as they ask for your help
and the protection of the Virgin Mary.
They pray that in good times and in bad
they will grow in love for each other;
that they will resolve to be of one heart
in the bond of peace.

Lord, in their struggles let them rejoice
that you are near to help them;
in their needs let them know
that you are there to rescue them;
in their joys let them see
that you are the source and completion of every happiness.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.