

MARRIAGE
AND
BURIAL
SERVICES

FORM FOR
THE SOLEMNIZATION
OF
HOLY MATRIMONY
AND
ORDER FOR
THE
BURIAL OF THE DEAD

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NOTES

MARRIAGES (ENGLAND AND WALES)

Marriages may be solemnized in such dissenting places of worship only that are licensed for that purpose. The ceremony must be with unlocked doors, in the presence of a Registrar, or Authorised Person, and two or more credible witnesses.

Each of the parties to be married must personally give notice to the Registrar of the district in which they have lived for the past seven days, who will then issue a certificate 15 days later authorising the marriage to go ahead. If both parties live in the same district, both are required to give notice. One of the parties must have resided for at least seven days in the district in which the place of worship is situated where the ceremony is to take place, unless such chapel is the usual place of worship of either party.

Where either party is under eighteen years of age, a declaration will be required that the father's (or guardian's) consent has been given.

Any knowingly false declaration involves the guilt of perjury and severe penalties are imposed.

Before the ceremony can commence, the certificates (issued after the expiry of fifteen days, as stated above) must be handed to the Registrar, or Authorized Person, who must be in attendance. Both he and the officiating minister must of course be given proper notice of the time and place appointed for the wedding. *On or shortly before the marriage the Registrar or Authorised person will also need to be given information by the parties to fill in on the marriage registers; information which may have changed since the time when the certificates were issued, or which is additional to that on the certificates.*

Whenever a marriage does not take place within twelve months of registration, fresh notice (as above) must be given.

Publishers Note: The contents of this booklet are in accordance with the current legal requirements for Marriage and Burial in England and Wales. If it is being used in any other country it is the duty of the officiating minister to make any adjustments necessary to comply with the requirements of the local jurisdiction.

FORM FOR THE SOLEMNIZATION OF HOLY MATRIMONY

The Ceremony should commence with prayer by the officiating Minister.

Standing: the Man on the right, the Woman on the left. The Minister shall address the congregation, saying:

WE are gathered together here in the sight of God and in the presence of these witnesses, to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony, an honourable estate instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying the mystical union betwixt Christ and His Church; which holy estate Christ sanctioned and honoured with His presence and first miracle, in Cana of Galilee; and is commended of the apostle Paul to be honourable among all men; and therefore is not by any to be taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly; but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God; duly and soberly considering the causes for which Matrimony was ordained.

First. It was ordained that children might be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Second. It was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

Into which holy estate these two persons come now to be joined. Therefore if any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace.

PAUSE.

[Should any adult person allege and declare any impediment, and will be bound with sufficient sureties (to the full value of such charges as the persons to be married do thereby sustain) to prove his allegation: then the marriage must be deferred until such time as the truth be tried.]

There being no impediment alleged, the Minister, addressing the persons to be married, shall say:

I require and charge you both as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any impediment why you may not lawfully be joined together in Matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured that so many as are joined together otherwise than God's Word doth allow, are not joined together by God; neither is their Matrimony lawful.

The Man shall then repeat after the Minister:

I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, A—— B——,¹ may not be joined in Matrimony to C—— D——.

¹ N.B.—The full names must be repeated as they stand upon the register.

The Woman shall similarly repeat after the Minister:

I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, C—— D——,² may not be joined in Matrimony to A—— B——.

The Minister shall say to the Man:

A—— B——, Wilt thou have this Woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour and keep her in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both do live?

The Man shall answer: I WILL.

The Minister shall say to the Woman:

C—— D——, Wilt thou have this Man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou obey him, and serve him, love, honour, and keep him in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him so long as ye both shall live?

The Woman shall answer: I WILL.

Then shall the Minister say:

Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?

² N.B.—The full names must be repeated as they stand upon the register.

Then the Minister shall cause the Man with his right hand to take the Woman by her right hand, and to repeat after him:

I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, A—— B——, do take thee, C—— D——, to be my lawful wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth.

The Woman shall now repeat after the Minister:

I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, C—— D——, do take thee, A—— B——, to be my lawful wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, to cherish and to obey, until death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth.

Loosing their hands, the Man shall put the ring³ on the fourth finger of the Woman's left hand. And the Man shall say after the Minister:

I give thee this ring in token of the Vow and Covenant now made betwixt me and thee, and in pledge of my affection and devotion (or fidelity).

³ Although customary, a ring is not legally imperative.