



PRAYER SERVICE BEFORE UMBRACHA PANI CEREMONY AT AN EAST INDIAN WEDDING

(Before the ceremony, the family members, cousins, relatives and friends gather together in the 'mando' (pandal), which is specially erected next to the house or they gather together around the altar)

In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.
(An appropriate hymn or bhajan is sung)

INTRODUCTION: *(Can be read by any member of the family or a friend).*

Dear friends, a wedding in the family is an occasion for rejoicing. It is a time for relatives and friends to gather to support and help. It also gives us an opportunity to pray for and bless those to be married. Together we gather around (Name of groom/bride) who is to be married tomorrow. Most of us have seen him/her grow, some of us have known him/her as a friend, while others have had a brief acquaintance. Our presence here symbolizes our best wishes, prayers and support as he/she begins a new journey through life.

Let us now listen to a reading from the Bible.

FOR BRIDE: Genesis 24: 58-61

FOR GROOM: Genesis 2: 21 – 24

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL:

Gathered together as a family let us pray specially for (Name of groom/bride).

Our response is: **Loving Father, hear our prayer**

1. That (Name of groom/bride) may be specially strengthened as he/she begins a new journey through life to face the challenges that he/she may face. We pray to the Lord. **R/-**
2. That the parents of (Name of bride/groom) be specially blessed for all the sacrifices that they have made in bringing him/her up. We pray to the Lord. **R/-**

3. That all the departed members of the family of (Name of groom/bride) may be granted eternal rest as they shower their blessings from above. We pray to the Lord. **R/-**
4. That everyone present here may continue to encourage (Name of groom/bride) with their prayers and good wishes in the years ahead. We pray to the Lord. **R/-**

Let us summarize our prayers by reciting the Lord's Prayer together... Our Father

(The groom/bride will now recite a prayer and everyone present will raise their right hands over him/her as a sign of blessing.)

GROOM/BRIDE:

Abba Father, I believe that you have blessed me with (Name of bride/groom). Out of all the people in the world, our paths crossed, we found each other and we love each other, because You willed it.

I thank you for my parents who have brought me up, loved me and made so many sacrifices. I thank you for my (brothers/sisters/family) and for the relationship we share. I thank you for my friends who have brought joy into my life. As I look ahead to my wedding day and my life ahead with (Name of groom/bride) I ask for your blessings and your strength to help me through difficult and trying times that may come my way. May my wedding day always remind me of your love for me as well as of the support and good wishes of all who have gathered here today. May our Blessed Lady intercede for my family and me. I make this prayer through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

(An appropriate hymn or bhajan may be sung)

After the water is collected and brought from the well, a few drops of holy water may be dropped into the vessels with the following prayer:

CONCLUDING PRAYER:

Loving Father, you are the source of life and all blessings. We invoke your blessings on this water, which will be used to bathe (Name of bride/groom) before his/her wedding. Keep him/her safe under your protection and care. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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