



WORLD DAY OF MARRIAGE

(This Prayer Service could be held in a family at home or among the BCC/ SCC of the Parish)

HYMN: 123 – ‘Father, we love you, we worship and adore you’. (*Joyful Celebration*) or any other.

OPENING PRAYER: Heavenly father, we are gathered as a Family/ Community in your name, to thank You for Your abiding love that binds us together. As we worship together, we pray you to deepen our faith and love of you and for one another.

INTRODUCTION: (*Leader or head of the Family*)

Like the good seed that is choked by thorns in the parable of the sower, good marriages can be choked by the cares and worries of everyday life. World Day of Marriage gives us a chance to clear those troubles away. Christian marriage has its foundation in the promise of life-long, faithful and fruitful love between husband and wife. In good times and in bad, in sickness and health, married love gives an exceptional witness to the fact that love has a language, and that language is the gift of self. Spouses live and learn this, daily and hand it on to their children. The home is the school of love, where we learn to counter selfishness with self-giving, and rejection with acceptance. No marriage and family are perfect. The key is in constantly striving to love, taking the risk to love, every single day. Such love always bears fruit, even if we don’t immediately see its results.

POPE FRANCIS SPEAKS: (*Amoris Laetitia, 315*)

“The Lord’s presence dwells in real and concrete families, with all their daily troubles and struggles, joys and hopes. Living in a family makes it hard for us to feign or lie; we cannot hide behind a mask. If that authenticity is inspired by love, then the Lord reigns there, with his joy and his peace. The spirituality of family love is made up of thousands of small but real gestures. In that variety of gifts and encounters which deepen communion, God has his dwelling place”.

SCRIPTURE READING: John 2: 1-11

REFLECTION: The attentive care and sensitivity of Blessed Virgin Mary made her notice the bridegroom’s predicament at the wedding feast and calmly presented it to Jesus her son without command or insistence. “*Whatever He says to you, do it.*” Mary displayed complete

confidence in Jesus and her willingness to leave the matter in His hands. This first miracle took place in an ordinary circumstance of a family celebration and nothing pre planned to draw public attention and popularity. Jesus and mother Mary who were so deeply engaged in life met a need and responded then and there. Jesus our Emmanuel is ever present. He is with us in the family and household duty and at the office, in the marketplace, at the Hospital bed or at a concert. He is a whisper or a prayer away. Mary is not only the mother of Jesus; she also represents the Mother Church and it is through the Christian community that Jesus comes across to the people of today. We must also be willing to be interrupted in our well scheduled ministry to meet the unexpected need placed before us.

(Brief moments of silent self - examination and mutual offering of forgiveness...)

(Suggestion: Couples could sing or listen to the song; 'I accept you from the hands of my God' by Glen & Teresa)

Ch: I accept You from the hands of my
God
You are God's gift to me, a beautiful gift
This gift of love, God has given me
I'm sorry I caused You pain
I'm sorry I offended You

May God wipe those tears from your eyes
May the God heal the hurt within You
From this day we live in love
together in the love of our God
You are precious to me, you're my guide
In your joys and your grieves, I'm with
You.

PRAYER FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Almighty and Eternal God, you blessed the union of married couples
so that they may reflect the union of Christ with his Church;

look with kindness on them, and strengthen their bond of love so that,
with their children, they may always rejoice in the gift of your blessing.

We ask your blessings especially for couples, who are facing problems,
give them the grace to forgive and heal their marriages with the gift of
your merciful love. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS:

RESPONSE: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all couples and families of the world: that the advances in technology and science may
not diminish but rather enhance our understanding of the mystery of human love expressed in
the loving union of man and woman. **R/**

For all married couples: that like Abraham they may learn to leave behind their certainties,
comfort zones and securities and set out for a land where as couples, they will experience the
two of them become one in loving communion with Jesus present in their marriage. **R/**

For those contemplating marriage: that they be open to life and lovingly accept the gift of a child as they participate in the creative work of God who is always life-giving. **R/**

For married couples in a strained relationship: that they be blessed with the grace of forgiveness and healing through the presence of Jesus in their marriage enabling them to turn their ordinariness and brokenness into the new wine of renewed joy. **R/**

For those who have gone before us and inspired us by their witness of married love: that they along with Mary and Joseph and all the saints continue to intercede for us and call upon God's blessing for us. **R/**

CONCLUDING PRAYER: O God, who in creating the human race, willed that man and wife should be one, keep, we pray, in a bond of inseparable love those who are united in the covenant of Marriage, so that, as you make their love fruitful, they may become, by your grace, witnesses to charity itself. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord Amen.

(Suggestion for closing hymn: Sing or listen to 'The Servant Song' by Richard Gillard)

THE SERVANT SONG

Will you let me be your servant?
Let me be as Christ to you.
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey.
We are travellers on the road.
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ light for you
In the night-time of your fear.
I will hold my hand out to you,
Speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping.
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you.

I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through

When we sing to God in heaven,
We shall find such harmony,
Borne of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony.

**-Commission for Liturgy
Archdiocese of Bombay.**