

# Readings for use in the Marriage Rite and in the Wedding Mass

## Note:

For the wedding liturgy or the nuptial Mass, you may choose to have either:

- a) The Gospel (proclaimed by the Priest – part 5) and one reading from *either* the Old Testament (part 1) *or* New Testament (part 2) *plus* a Psalm (part 3) and Gospel Acclamation (part 4), *or*
- b) The Gospel (proclaimed by the Priest – part 5) and two readings from *both* the Old Testament (part 1) *and* New Testament (part 2) *plus* a Psalm (part 3) and Gospel Acclamation (part 4).

The order for each would be:

- a) (*One reading plus Gospel*) Old Testament (part 1) *or* New Testament Reading (part 2) Psalm – either sung or spoken (part 3) Gospel Acclamation (part 4) Gospel (part 5)
- b) (*Two readings plus Gospel*) Old Testament Reading (part 1) Psalm – either sung or spoken (part 3) New Testament Reading (part 2) Gospel Acclamation (part 4) Gospel (part 5)

# Part 1. Old Testament readings

Genesis 1:26–28. 31

## **A reading from the book of Genesis**

*Male and female he created them.*

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good.

Genesis 2:18–24

## **A reading from the book of Genesis**

*And they will be two in one flesh.*

The Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate.' So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him. So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed:

'This at last is bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh! This is to be called woman, for this was taken from man.'

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.

Tobit 8:5–10

## **A reading from the book of Tobit**

*May God bring us to old age together.*

Tobias said to Sarah, 'You and I must pray and petition our Lord to win his grace and protection.' They began praying for protection, and this was how he began: 'You are blessed, O God of our fathers; blessed, too, is your name for ever and ever. Let the heavens bless you and all things you have made for evermore. It was you who created Adam, you who created Eve his wife to be his help and support; and from these two the human race was born. It was you who said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make him a helpmate like himself." And so I do not take my sister for any lustful motive; I do it in singleness of heart. Be kind enough to have pity on her and on me and bring us to old age together.'

And together they said, 'Amen, Amen'.

## **A reading from the Song of Songs**

*For love is as strong as death.*

I hear my Beloved. See how he comes leaping on the mountains, bounding over the hills. My Beloved is like a gazelle, like a young stag. See where he stands behind our wall. He looks in at the window, he peers through the lattice.

My Beloved lifts up his voice, he says to me, 'Come then, my love, my lovely one, come. My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock. In the coverts of the cliff, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet and your face is beautiful.' My beloved is mine and I am his. Set me like a seal on your heart, like a seal on your arm. The flash of it is a flash of fire, a flame of the Lord himself. Love no flood can quench, no torrents drown.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

## **A reading from the prophet Jeremiah**

*I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and Judah.*

See, the days are coming - it is the Lord who speaks - when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive - it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, 'Learn to know the Lord!' No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest - it is the Lord who speaks.

## Part 2. New Testament Readings

Romans 8:31–35. 37–39

### **A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans**

*Who will separate us from the love of Christ?*

With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us - he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 12:1–2. 9–18

### **A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans**

*Offer to God your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to him.*

Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do.

Do not let your love be a pretence, but sincerely prefer good to evil. Love each other as much as brothers should, and have a profound respect for each other. Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with great earnestness of spirit. If you have hope, this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying. If any of the saints are in need you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care.

Bless those - who persecute you: never curse them, bless them. Rejoice with those who rejoice and be sad with those in sorrow. Treat everyone with equal kindness; never be condescending but make real friends with the poor. Do not allow yourself to become self-satisfied. Never repay evil with evil but let everyone see that you are interested only in the highest ideals. Do all you can to live at peace with everyone.

1 Corinthians 6:13–15. 17–20

### **A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**

*Your body is a temple of the Spirit.*

The body is not meant for fornication; it is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. God, who raised the Lord from the dead, will by his power raise us up too.

You know, surely, that your bodies are members making up the body of Christ. But anyone who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

Keep away from fornication. All the other sins are committed outside the body; but to fornicate is to sin against your own body. Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God.

## **A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**

*If I am without love, it will do me no good whatever.*

Be ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them.

If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing everything, and if I have faith in all its fullness, to move mountains, but without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever.

Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.

Love does not come to an end.

Ephesians 5:2. 21–33

## **A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians**

*This mystery has many implications and I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.*

Follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up in our place. Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body - and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church. To sum up; you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband.

Colossians 3:12–17

## **A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians**

*Above all have love, which is the bond of perfection.*

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful. Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

### **A reading from the first letter of St John**

*Our love is to be something real and active.*

My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything. My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us.

1 John 4:7–12

### **A reading from the first letter of St John**

*God is love.*

My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away. My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another. No one has ever seen God; but as long as we love one another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us.

## Part 3. Responsorial Psalms

Ps 32:12. 18. 20–22

### **R. The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.**

They are happy, whose God is the Lord, the people he has chosen as his own. The Lord looks on those who revere him, on those who hope in his love. R.

Our soul is waiting for the Lord. The Lord is our help and our shield. In him do our hearts find joy. We trust in his holy name. R.

May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you. R.

Ps 33:2–9

### **R. I will bless the Lord at all times**

*or*

### **R. Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.**

I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise always on my lips; in the Lord my soul shall make its boast. The humble shall hear and be glad. R.

Glorify the Lord with me. Together let us praise his name. I sought the Lord and he answered me; from all my terrors he set me free. R.

Look towards him and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed. This poor man called; the Lord heard him and rescued him from all his distress. R. The angel of the Lord is encamped around those who revere him, to rescue them. Taste and see that the Lord is good. He is happy who seeks refuge in him. R.

Ps 102:1–2. 8. 13. 17–18

### **R. The Lord is kind and merciful.**

*or*

### **R. The Lord's kindness is everlasting to those who fear him.**

My soul, give thanks to the Lord, all my being, bless his holy name. My soul, give thanks to the Lord and never forget all his blessings. R.

The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy. As a father has compassion on his sons, the Lord has pity on those who fear him. R.

The love of the Lord is everlasting upon those who hold him in fear; his justice reaches out to children's children when they keep his covenant in truth. R.

Ps 111:1–9

### **R. Happy are those who do what the Lord commands.**

*or*

### **R. Alleluia!**

Happy the man who fears the Lord, who takes delight in his commands. His sons will be powerful on earth; the children of the upright are blessed. R.

Riches and wealth are in his house; his justice stands firm for ever. He is a light in the darkness for the upright: he is generous, merciful and just. R.

The good man takes pity and lends, he conducts his affairs with honour. The just man will never waver: he will be remembered for ever. R.

He has no fear of evil news; with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord. With a steadfast heart he will not fear; he will see the downfall of his foes. R.

Open-handed, he gives to the poor; his justice stands firm for ever. His head will be raised in glory. R.

Ps 127:1-5

**R. Happy are those who fear the Lord.**

*or*

**R. See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.**

O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways! By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper. R.

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house; your children like shoots of the olive, around your table. R.

Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Zion all the days of your life! R. Ps 144:8-10. 15. 17-18

**R. The Lord is compassionate to all his creatures.**

The Lord is kind and full of compassion, Slow to anger, abounding in love. How good is the Lord to all, compassionate to all his creatures. R.

All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord, and your friends shall repeat their blessing. The eyes of all creatures look to you and give them their food in due time. R.

The Lord is just in all his ways and loving in all his deeds. He is close to all who call him, who call on him from their hearts. R.

Ps 148:1-4. 9-14

**R. Let all praise the name of the Lord**

*or*

**R. Alleluia!**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights. Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his host. R.

Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, shining stars. Praise him, highest heavens and the waters above the heavens. R.

All mountains and hills, all fruit trees and cedars, beasts, wild and tame, reptiles and birds on the wing. R.

All earth's kings and peoples, earth's princes and rulers: young men and maidens, old men together with children. R.

Let them praise the name of the Lord for he alone is exalted. The splendour of his name reaches beyond heaven and earth. R.

## Part 4. Gospel Acclamation (Sung before the Gospel)

*During Lent the "Alleluia" is not used, but one of the four alternative Gospel Acclamation verses are used instead, such as "Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ."*

*If the Gospel Acclamation is not sung, it should be omitted.*

1 John 4:8.11

Alleluia, alleluia! God is love; let us love one another as he has loved us. Alleluia!

1 John 4:12

Alleluia, alleluia! If we love one another, God will live in us in perfect love. Alleluia!

1 John 4:16

Alleluia, alleluia! All who live in love, live in God, and God in them. Alleluia!

1 John 4:7

Alleluia, alleluia! Everyone who loves is born of God and knows him. Alleluia!

## Part 5. Gospel (Proclaimed by the Priest or Deacon)

Matthew 5:1–12

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

*Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.*

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage. Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied. Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God. Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God. Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

Matthew 5:13–16

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

*You are the light of the world.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men. 'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

Matthew 7:21. 24–29

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

*He built his house on rock.*

Jesus said to his disciples:

'It is not those who say to me, "Lord, Lord", who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven.

'Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against the house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!'

Jesus had now finished what he wanted to say, and his teaching made a deep impression on the people because he taught them with authority, and not like their own scribes.

Matthew 19:3-6

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

*So then, what God has united, no one must divide.*

Some Pharisees approached Jesus, and to test him they said, 'Is it against the Law for a man to divorce his wife on any pretext whatever?' He answered, 'Have you not read that the creator from the beginning made them male and female and that he said: This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body? They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.'

Matthew 22:35-40

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

*This is the greatest and first commandment. The second is similar to it.*

A lawyer, to disconcert Jesus, put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

Mark 10:6-9

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

*They are no longer two, therefore, but one body.*

Jesus said, 'From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.'

John 2:1-11

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

*This was the first of the signs given by Jesus; it was given at Cana in Galilee.*

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' Jesus said, 'Woman why turn to me? My hour has not come yet.' mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water,' and they filled them to the brim. 'Draw some out now,' he told them, 'and take it to the steward.' They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from - only the servants who had drawn the water knew - the steward called the bridegroom and said, 'People generally serve the best wine first, and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink, but you have kept the best wine till now.'

This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him.

John 15:9–12

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

*Remain in my love.*

Jesus said to his disciples:

'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete. This is my commandment: love one another, as I loved you.' A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants anymore, because a servant does not know his master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name.'

John 17:20–26

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

*May they be completely one.*

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

'Holy Father, I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me. May they all be done. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe that it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the world will realise that it was you who sent me and that I have loved them as much as you loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Father, Righteous One, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them.'