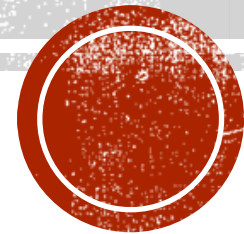


# THE SACRAMENTS

## Matrimony



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# THE SACRAMENTS

- The word “sacrament” in Greek means “mystery”
  - Our Lord was called “a great mystery” (1 Tim 3:16) by St. Paul
- The Seven Holy Sacraments:
  - The Sacrament of Holy Orders (Priesthood)
  - The Sacrament of Baptism
  - The Sacrament of Confirmation
  - The Sacrament of The Eucharist
  - The Sacrament of Repentance & Confession
  - The Sacrament of The Anointing of The Sick
  - **The Sacrament of Matrimony**



# MATRIMONY



# MATRIMONY

- “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helper comparable to him.”  
**(Gen 2:18)**
  - Union of man+woman = Jesus+Church
- This sacrament was possibly instituted at the wedding at Cana of Galilee **(Jn 2:1-11)** or during His talk with the Pharisees about divorce..., “What God has joined together, let no man separate” **(Mt 19:6)**



# MATRIMONY

- Characteristics of an Orthodox Marriage:
  - Both husband and wife **must** be Orthodox Christians
  - Monogamy
    - “Let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.” (1 Cor 7:2)
  - Divorce is allowed only for sexual immorality reasons
    - “Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery” (Mt 19:9)
- The goal
  - The goal of marriage is not the fulfillment of one’s needs; rather, the goal of marriage is heaven
    - “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matt 6:33)



# MATRIMONY

- Marriage is considered a great mystery—it is the human image of “the great mystery of Christ and the Church” (Eph. 6:21-33) made eternal by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Marriage
- **Wedding service according to the Coptic Rite**
  - Begins with the procession of the Groom and Bride to the altar
  - → declaration/blessings of ceremony (x3)
  - → the Prayer of Thanksgiving
  - → prayer for the vestments
  - → Liturgy of the Word (Pauline Epistle and the Gospel)
  - → the priests supplicate God for His blessings in a series of prayers (litanies)
  - → the Creed
  - → prayers and litanies for the oil, the rings and the crowns in turn
  - → finally the priests address the couple with commands for a successful marriage before they kneel before the altar and are dismissed



# MATRIMONY

- **The Vestments**

- Vested with ornate vestments showing that they are becoming a King and Queen over their new small Kingdom formed by their marriage.
- Often vested with colours of red—which denotes blood, symbolizes death and it reminds us that each is willing to die for the other, and indeed are sacramentally dying for the other. There is no more 'I' in marriage but one flesh, which is a life-long commitment



# MATRIMONY

- **The Oil**

- Considered oil of joy, used in weddings, from Bright Saturday
- Not Holy Myron



- **The Rings**

- A declaration/sign of commitment. The rings are circular, without beginning or end. They are made of precious gold that never corrodes or rusts. This represents the eternal nature of true divine love.
- Many couples also like to engrave their spouse's name on the inside of the ring, symbolising that love for their spouse is engraved upon the innermost place in their heart forever

- **The Crowns**

- Showing that we are King and Queen of our new church, just as any royal crowning ceremony, this one is ours.





# MATRIMONY



## ■ The Commands

- The right hands of the groom and the bride are joined while the priest recites the prayer that beseeches God to 'join and unite them in one mind and one flesh'. The couples' hands are covered with a white cloak, so we do not see where the one begins and the other ends.
  - Importance of choosing a proper partner, not lust/serial dating

## ■ Kneeling at the Altar

- The service concludes with the couple kneeling at the altar for the final blessing. This shows that marriage is fulfilled as an orientation towards the Kingdom of God. At the altar the couple are ever-looking to the future Kingdom, their marriage being an outpost of that Kingdom here on Earth.



# MATRIMONY

- How to choose the right partner
- Need to know one another → Appearance of relationships can be deceiving
- Aim is to 'grow in Christ' which offers 'Life-giving love'
  - Matthew 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."
- Think of short and long term goals
  - Remember the 'chemistry/infatuation' phase fades with time, you need to know you want to remain with this individual
- Key qualities to consider: a) humility; b) able to forgive; c) handles conflict in healthy way; d) communicates; e) prays; f) makes and keeps friends
- Key Questions to ask: a) what is an example of a marriage I respect and why; b) what is an example of a marriage I want to avoid and why; and c) why do I want to get married?



**THANK YOU!**

