

Order of Service – John & Mary

We have come together in the presence of God to witness the marriage of John Smith and Mary Anne Jones, to ask his blessing on them and to share their joy.

The scriptures teach us that marriage is a gift of God and a means of his grace, a holy mystery in which man and woman become one flesh. It is God's purpose that, as husband and wife give themselves to each other in love throughout their lives, they shall be united in that love as Christ is united with his Church.

Marriage is given that husband and wife may comfort and help each other, living faithfully together in need and in plenty, in sorrow and in joy. It is given that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love. It is given that they may have children and be blessed in caring for them, and bring them up in accordance with God's will, to his praise and glory. [This sentence can be removed or altered to recognise and appreciate existing children]

In marriage, husband and wife belong to one another and begin a new life together within the community. It is a way of life that all should honour and must not be undertaken carelessly, lightly or selfishly, but reverently and responsibly and after serious thought.

This is the way of life, created and hallowed by God, that John and Mary are now to begin. They will each give their consent to the other. They will join hands and exchange solemn vows and, in token of this, they will give and receive a ring.

Therefore, on this their wedding day, we pray with them that, strengthened and guided by God, they may fulfil his purpose for the whole of their earthly life together.

The Minister addresses the congregation:

But first, I am required to ask anyone present, who knows a reason why these persons may not lawfully marry, to declare it now.

The Minister addresses the couple:

The vows you are about to take are to be made in the presence of God, who is the judge of all and who knows all the secrets of our hearts; therefore, if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

The bridegroom repeats after The Minister

I do solemnly declare / that I know not / of any lawful impediment / why I, John Smith / may not be joined in matrimony/ to Mary Jones.

The bride repeats after The Minister

I do solemnly declare/ that I know not / of any lawful impediment / Why I, Mary Jones / may not be joined in matrimony/ to John Smith .

The Minister asks the bridegroom

John, will you take Mary to be your wife? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her, as long as you both shall live?

The bridegroom replies

I will.

The Minister asks the bride:

Mary, will you take John to be your Husband? Will you love him, comfort him, honour and protect him, and forsaking all others, be faithful to him, as long as you both shall live?

The bride replies:

I will.

The Minister asks:

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

The reply is given:

I do.

The bride and bridegroom face each other. The bride's right hand in his and repeats after The Minister.

I call upon these persons here present / to witness that I, John Smith / do take thee, Mary Anne Jones / 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 do us part / according to God's holy law / and this is my solemn vow.

The bride repeats after The Minister

I call upon these persons here present/ to witness that I, Mary Anne Jones / do take thee, John Smith / 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 and to cherish / till death do us part / according to God's holy law / and this is my solemn vow.

They loose hands. The Minister receives the rings from the best man and says.

Let these rings be to John and Mary a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, to remind them of the vow and covenant which they have made this day.

The bridegroom places the appropriate ring on the third finger of the bride's left hand and, holding the ring there repeats after The Minister:

I give you this ring / as a sign of our marriage / with my body I honour you, / all that I am I give to you / and all that I have I share with you.

The bride places the other ring on the third finger of the bridegroom's left hand and, holding the ring there repeats after the Minister:

I give you this ring / as a sign of our marriage / with my body I honour you, / all that I am I give to you / and all that I have I share with you.

The Minister addresses the congregation

In the presence of God, and before this congregation, John and Mary have given their consent and made their marriage vows to each other. They have declared their marriage by the joining of hands and by giving and receiving rings. I therefore proclaim that they are husband and wife.

The Minister joins the right hands together and says:

Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.

The Minister addresses the groom:

You may kiss your bride!

Signing the Marriage Schedule (Bride, Groom, the Minister and witnesses)

The Minister addresses the congregation

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you Mr & Mrs Smith!