

THE SERVICE OF BETROTHAL

The priest stands in the Royal Doors of the sanctuary, looking towards the couple who are to be betrothed as they stand outside the Royal Doors, the man on the right, and the woman on the left. The couple stands before a specially prepared table upon which are placed candles, the Gospel book, the crowns and the rings. Turning towards the altar and facing east, the priest begins the service by singing,

Priest: Blessed is our God always, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Chanter: Amen.

Priest: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the peace of God and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For peace in the whole world, for the stability of the holy Churches of God and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For this holy house and for those who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our Archbishop (*Name*), the honorable presbyters, the deacons in the service of Christ; for all the clergy and the laity, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the servant of God (*Name*) and the servant of God (*Name*) who now pledge themselves to one another and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That there may be promised unto them children for the continuation of the human race, granting unto them all of their prayers that are for salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the servant of God (*Name*) and the servant of God (*Name*), that the Lord our God will send down upon them a perfect and peaceful love and grant them His protection, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That the Lord our God may keep them in oneness of mind and heart, and in steadfast faith; let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That the Lord our God will bless them, granting them harmony and perfect trust for one another, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the servant of God (*Name*) and the servant of God (*Name*), they may keep the course and manner of their life together blameless and unashamed, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That the Lord our God may grant unto them an honorable marriage and a bed undefiled, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That both they and we may be delivered from all affliction, wrath, danger and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us; save us; have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Chanter: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Remembering our most-holy, pure, blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

Chanter: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For to You are due all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

THE FIRST PRAYER OF BLESSING

Priest: O God eternal, You have brought into unity those who before had been separate, and in so doing have ordained for them an indissoluble bond of love. You blessed Isaac and Rebecca and have declared them to be the heirs of Your promise. Bless also these Your servants *(Name)* and *(Name)*, and guide them into every good work that is pleasing in Your sight.

For You are a merciful and loving God, and to You do we offer glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Chanter: Amen.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

THE SECOND PRAYER OF BLESSING

Priest: O Lord our God, Who first betrothed the Church as a pure bride called forth from among the nations, bless this betrothal and unite these Your servants, *(Name)* and *(Name)*, keeping them in peace and oneness of mind and heart.

For to You are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Chanter: Amen.

Then the priest takes the rings, blesses them, making with them the sign of the Cross over the groom's head, and says three times:

The servant of God *(Name)* is betrothed to the servant of God *(Name)*, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Chanter: Amen.

The priest then approaches the bride, making the sign of the Cross over her head with the rings and says three times:

The servant of God (*Name*) is betrothed to the servant of God (*Name*), in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Chanter: Amen.

The priest places the rings on their right hands and the sponsor steps forward and exchanges the rings three times, in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

THE PRAYER OF BETROTHAL

Priest: O Lord our God, You accompanied the servant of the patriarch Abraham to Mesopotamia, when he was sent to seek a wife for his lord Isaac, and You revealed to him that Isaac should betroth Rebecca by the sign of her drawing water from a well: bless the betrothal of these Your servants (*Name*) and (*Name*) and strengthen the word that has been spoken by them. Establish them in that sacred union that comes from You. Lord, in the beginning You created male and female, and it is by Your will that a woman is joined to a man for mutual support and for the perpetuation of the human race. O Lord our God, from generation to generation, You have sent forth Your truth to Your heirs and Your promise to Your servants, our fathers, Your chosen people: look upon this Your servant (*Name*) and this Your servant (*Name*), and seal their betrothal in faith, in harmony, in truth and in love. For You, O Lord, have declared that a pledge is to be given and held inviolate in all things: by a ring Joseph was given authority in Egypt; by a ring Daniel was exalted in Babylon; by a ring the truth of Tamar was revealed; by a ring our heavenly Father showed compassion upon His prodigal son, for He said, "Put a ring upon his right hand, kill the fatted calf, and let us eat and rejoice." Your own right hand, O Lord, armed Moses in the Red Sea. By the word of Your truth the heavens were established and the earth was set upon its foundations. May the right hands of Your servants be blessed by Your mighty word and by Your uplifted arm. Master, bless this putting on of rings with Your heavenly blessing. May an angel of the Lord go before them and lead them in Your way all the days of their life.

For You are He who blesses and sanctifies all things, and to You do we offer up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Chanter: Amen.