

Nuptial Mass

Missa votiva pro sponsis

The God who joins, Christ who gives himself, and the household ordered through Sion to eternal life

1962 order. White; votive Mass of II class; *Gloria* is said and, ordinarily, no *Credo*. When the blessing is permitted on a Sunday or day of I class, the occurring Mass replaces this formulary, its Collect commemorates the nuptial Mass under one conclusion, and the nuptial blessing remains. All Souls and the Sacred Triduum prohibit both commemoration and blessing.

Proper / rite	TLM text / reference	Scriptural axis	Connection
Introit	<i>Deus Israel coniungat vos; Beati omnes qui timent Dominum</i> (Tob. 7:15; 8:19; Ps. 127:1)	God joins; fear walks	Tobias and Sarah's mercy enters the pilgrim psalm: divine joining becomes a common way of blessing.
Collect	<i>Exaudi nos</i> : what human ministry performs, let God's blessing <i>potius impleatur</i>	Principal and ministerial agency	The rite asks that its visible ministry be fulfilled more deeply by the divine cause.
Epistle	Eph. 5:22–33; <i>Christus dilexit Ecclesiam, et seipsum tradidit pro ea</i>	Christ and the Church	The one-flesh text is governed by Christ's self-oblation, baptismal washing, nourishment, and holy Bride.
Gradual	<i>Uxor tua sicut vitis abundans</i> ; children as olive shoots around the table (Ps. 127:3)	Vine, olives, house, table	The primary procreative / educative end appears as gift and vocation, ordered through Sion to worship and peace.
Alleluia	<i>Mittat vobis Dominus auxilium de sancto: et de Sion tueatur vos</i> (Ps. 19:3)	Help from sanctuary and Sion	The couple's natural society is placed inside the worship and guardianship of God's people.
Seasonal chant	After Septuagesima: Tract, Ps. 127:4–6. Paschaltide: Ps. 19:3 and 133:3, <i>qui fecit caelum et terram</i>	Fear, Sion, Jerusalem, creation	The same nuptial blessing is heard penitentially as persevering fear or paschally under the risen Creator.
Gospel	Matt. 19:3–6; <i>ab initio; una caro; Quod ergo Deus coniunxit</i>	Creation and indissolubility	Christ answers the divorce test by returning to the Creator's beginning and present act of joining.
Offertory	<i>In te speravi; in manibus tuis tempora mea</i> (Ps. 30:15–16)	Trust and all one's times	The spouses' future is entrusted where the Church places bread and wine under Christ's unique sacrifice.
Secret	<i>pro sacra connubii lege munus oblatum; largitor and dispositor</i>	Gift, law, and ordering	God, giver of the marital work, is asked to order both the offering and the life it accompanies.
Nuptial prayers	<i>Propitiare, Domine: te auctore / te auxiliante. Deus, qui potestate: creation, Christ–Church, matriarchs, heaven</i>	Author, ends, and whole economy	After the Pater propagation, spousal aid / chastity, and heavenly rest are ordered beneath divine causality.
Communion	<i>Ecce sic benedicetur</i> ; descendants; <i>pax super Israel</i> (Ps. 127:4, 6)	Blessing reaches Israel's peace	At Communion domestic blessing opens into ecclesial peace rather than closing upon the household.
Post-communion	<i>instituta providentiae; legitima societate connectis; longaeva pace custodias</i>	Providence, bond, perseverance	The joining becomes a stable social relation requiring God's lifelong custody and peace.
Final blessing / admonition	<i>Deus Abraham, Deus Isaac, et Deus Iacob</i> ; generations and <i>vitam aeternam sine fine</i> ; fear, mutual love / fidelity, chastity, Catholic education, aspersion	Patriarchs, household rule, final beatitude	After <i>Ite, missa est</i> , temporal generations yield to life without end; the admonition orders primary and secondary ends into a lived rule.

Sense	Synthesis
Literal	Tobias and Sarah receive mercy; the psalms bless a God-fearing household; Paul exhorts wives and husbands; Christ appeals to creation against divorce; the Roman prayers bless this bridegroom and bride.
Allegorical	The baptized Church, formed from the opened side of the New Adam and nourished by him, is the Bride for whom Christ hands himself over; sacramental marriage effectively signifies that indivisible covenant.
Moral	Spouses receive generation and education as marriage's primary objective end and live its intrinsic secondary ends in mutual aid, fidelity, chastity, prayer, peace, and hospitality, without coercion or domination.
Anagogical	Sion, Jerusalem, generations, old age, and earthly peace are gathered into the blessing's explicit heavenly rest, celestial kingdom, and life without end—the marriage supper to which the temporal sign points.

Scriptural Date and Location

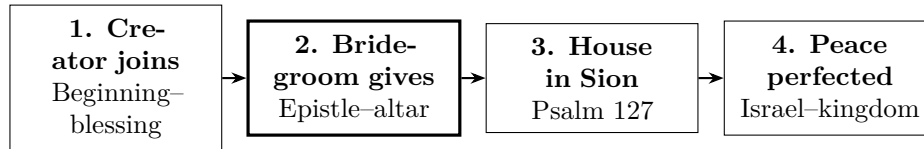
Catholic canonical order governs; proper rows give traditional composition data under Location and Date, the additional Gospel row gives the narrated setting, spanning rows distinguish inherited attribution from historical judgment, and Psalm numbers follow the Vulgate with common modern numbers in parentheses.

Proper	Citation	Location	Date
Introit	Tob. 7:15; 8:19	Nineveh, Assyria (present-day Iraq)	early 7th c. BC
An older Catholic reconstruction assigns most of the book to Tobit and Tobias in their Assyrian-diaspora home, writing for dispersed Israel after the son's return and the father's healing. The appointed scenes occur earlier at Ecbatana in Media: Raguel entrusts Sarah to Tobias, and both households discover providential mercy. Modern judgment instead finds an anonymous Jewish author, probably early second century BC at an unknown place. The missal follows the shorter Vulgate recension, not the long-Greek verse alignment (Tobit introduction, <i>NABRE</i> ; <i>Catholic Encyclopedia</i> , "Book of Tobias").			
Alleluia	Ps. 19:3 (modern 20:3)	Kingdom of Israel; exact site unrecorded	c. 1000 BC
The title traditionally names David but gives no occasion or writing site. Israel's assembly asks sanctuary help for the Lord's anointed before conflict, locating royal need beneath covenant worship and carrying it toward messianic hope. Modern scholarship cannot identify the individual author, date, or place; Sion is the prayer's cultic and theological source of help, not proof of composition there (Ps. 20 and notes, <i>NABRE</i>).			
Offertory	Ps. 30:15–16 (modern 31:15–16)	Kingdom of Israel; exact site unrecorded	c. 1000 BC
The title traditionally attributes the threatened lament to David without naming an episode or writing site. The speaker entrusts God and all his times amid enemies; Christ later makes the psalm's final entrustment his own from the Cross, and Stephen echoes it. Modern authorship, date, and place remain unrecoverable. Augustine's Psalter reads <i>sortes meae</i> , not the missal's <i>tempora mea</i> (Ps. 31 and notes, <i>NABRE</i>).			
Introit verse / Gradual / Tract / Communion	Ps. 127:1, 3–6 (modern 128)	Israel; exact site unrecorded	Undated in title
The anonymous <i>Song of Ascents</i> names no author, place, or date. Traditionally received among pilgrim songs for ascent to Jerusalem, its wisdom voice blesses every God-fearing household through labor, spouse, children, Sion, Jerusalem, generations, and Israel's peace. Modern study does not securely recover composition data; pilgrimage use does not prove Jerusalem authorship (Ps. 128 and notes, <i>NABRE</i>).			
Paschal Alleluia	Ps. 133:3 (modern 134:3)	Israel; exact site unrecorded	Undated in title
This anonymous <i>Song of Ascents</i> addresses servants keeping night watch in the sanctuary and returns blessing from Sion in the Creator's name. The title supplies a liturgical collection, not a recoverable biography or date; Jerusalem is the narrated and cultic horizon, while the writing site remains unknown (Ps. 134 and notes, <i>NABRE</i>).			
Gospel	Matt. 19:3–6	Judea / Palestine	c. AD 40–45
<i>Narrated event</i>	Matt. 19:1–12	Region of Judea beyond the Jordan (Perea)	Final journey, c. AD 30
Ancient tradition presents the Apostle Matthew writing in the language of Palestinian Jews for Jewish believers. Modern majority judgment dates the final Greek Gospel after AD 70 and often proposes Antioch, though neither date nor place is certain. Earlier, Pharisees test Jesus concerning divorce; he returns from Mosaic concession to the Creator's beginning, after which the disciples ask about marriage and continence (Matthew introduction and 19, <i>NABRE</i> ; <i>Catholic Encyclopedia</i> , "Gospel of St. Matthew").			
Epistle	Eph. 5:22–33	Rome, Italy	c. AD 61–63
Tradition places St. Paul writing from Roman imprisonment to saints and households at Ephesus and perhaps through them to churches of Roman Asia; he interprets Genesis within Christ's self-gift, baptismal washing, and nourishment of the Church. Modern scholarship debates Pauline authorship and proposes both an early-60s Pauline horizon and a later disciple, with provenance correspondingly uncertain (Ephesians introduction and 5, <i>NABRE</i>).			

The Propers: Themes and Movement

Governing thesis: the God who joins orders the household to the eternal wedding

At the altar, the God who joined the first pair and showed mercy to Tobias and Sarah receives the spouses' free covenant and the Church's oblation. Through Christ's Paschal self-gift he elevates natural one-flesh society into an efficacious sign of Christ's union with his Church. Its traditional objective order is primary toward the generation and education of children, secondary toward mutual aid and the chaste remedy of concupiscence, and ultimate toward God's glory, charity, and the Lamb's wedding.



God joins; ministers serve (*Int., Coll., Gosp., Sec., Nupt. I, Postcomm.*)

The Introit asks that Israel's God join the couple; the Gospel declares that God has joined; the Postcommunion says that God connects them in lawful society. Around those claims, the Collect asks that what is ministered by the Church's office be fulfilled *more truly by blessing*, while the Secret calls God both giver and disposer of the work. The first nuptial prayer gives the grammar its shortest form: what is joined with God as author is preserved with God as helper.

This divine primacy neither erases nor competes with consent. Aquinas says that mutual present consent is the efficient cause instrumentally under God, the principal cause (*ST* Suppl., q. 45, a. 1). In the Latin tradition the baptized spouses confer Matrimony upon one another; the priest receives consent in the Church's name and blesses the union. The Collect's *nostro officio* therefore describes genuine ecclesial ministry without making the priest the sacramental minister in place of the spouses.

Causal grammar carried by the appointed prayers

coniungat / coniungitur / coniunxit; ministratur / impleatur; largitor / dispositor; auctore / auxiliante / servetur; connectis / custodias. The visible covenant, enduring bond, ecclesial rite, and persevering grace are distinct effects within one ordered divine-human action.

From the beginning: nature restored and elevated (*Gosp., Nupt. II*)

The Pharisees ask which cause can justify dismissal; Christ asks whether they have read the Creator. His *ab initio*, male and female, leaving, cleaving, and one flesh draw Genesis 1 and 2 into a single answer. Chrysostom observes that divorce fights both nature—by cutting one flesh—and law—by dividing what God joined (*Homily 62 on Matthew*). The disciples' ensuing question about continence prevents a reduction of Christian vocation to marriage alone.

The long blessing interprets the Gospel liturgically: creation ex nihilo, cosmic order, the divine image, woman as inseparable help, and the prohibition against dividing what God instituted from one. Its sequence joins the hierarchy without confusion: propagation and education are the primary institutional end; mutual aid, fidelity, and chaste peace are intrinsic secondary ends serving persons and household; heavenly rest is ultimate. Grace heals and elevates all three orders toward God's worship and the supernatural common good.

Christ loves, washes, offers, and nourishes his Bride (*Ep., Off., Sec.*)

Ephesians 5 must be heard from 5:2 and 5:18–21: Christ hands himself over as fragrant sacrifice; the Spirit forms a thankful body; believers submit to one another in Christ's fear. Thus headship is not private utility. Aquinas says government is ordered to a common good, and the husband's pattern is Christ's self-emptying oblation (*Commentary on Ephesians* 5, lectures 8–10). Chrysostom therefore demands sacrificial love, common prayer, shared goods, patient honor, and a household becoming a little church.

Paul's Bride is washed by water and word, presented holy, nourished and cherished as Christ's own members. Augustine's reading of the sleeping New Adam's opened side joins blood and water to the sacraments by which the Church is formed (*Tractate on John* 120.2). Matrimony signifies a union already created by the Pasch; it does not make husband into savior or wife into passive material.

Household fruit belongs to Sion (*Int., Grad., All., Tr., Comm.*)

Psalms 127 supplies more of the proper chants than any other text. Its sequence is exact: fear of the Lord, walking in his ways, fruitful vine, olive shoots, table, blessing from Sion, Jerusalem's goods, generations, and peace upon Israel. The household remains real, but it is blessed from a sanctuary and completed in a people's peace.

Augustine reads the many walkers as one in Christ and the Church as wife, mother, and bearer of children. Yet he explicitly preserves the literal good: children are a blessing when good, and childlessness does not make a faithful couple accursed (*Exposition on Psalm 127/128*). *Proles* names marriage's primary objective order to generation and education toward God, not an arithmetic measure of holiness or a guarantee of conception. The Gradual's table can acquire a Eucharistic resonance from its placement, but the psalm's literal household table must not be silently replaced.

Augustinian good	Ritual embodiment	Supernatural ordering
<i>Proles</i>	Vine, olive shoots, generations, and the final admonition to educate children diligently in the Catholic religion.	The primary natural / institutional end: generation completed by formation for worship; actual infertility neither destroys the bond nor measures sanctity.
<i>Fides</i>	One bed, mutual fidelity and conjugal chastity, the Offertory's entrusting of all times, and lifelong peace.	The just promise becomes an exercise of charity patterned upon Christ's unwavering covenant.
<i>Sacramentum</i>	God joins what man must not separate; the bond prefigures Christ and the Church.	Indissolubility is both moral claim and stable sign; it is not the sacramental character conferred by Baptism, Confirmation, or Orders.

Temporal peace reaches toward the eternal wedding (*Comm., Postcomm., Final*)

The Communion does not end at domestic abundance: *pax super Israel*. The Postcommunion asks that providence accompany its own institutions and guard the joined spouses in long peace. The final blessing names Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, asks for generations, and then subordinates even a full earthly life to *vitam aeternam sine fine*. The long blessing already asked for the rest of the blessed and heavenly kingdoms.

Marriage consequently has a temporal terminus and an anagogical fulfillment. A valid, ratified, and consummated sacramental bond is dissolved only by death and confers no indelible character; the Church's law separately governs a ratified but unconsummated marriage. In the resurrection there is no marrying (Matt. 22:30), because the sign yields to the definitive communion it signifies: Christ and the glorified Church, the marriage supper, and the New Jerusalem (Rev. 19:6–9; 21:1–4, 9–14). Consecrated continence anticipates that future directly; marriage images the covenant by faithful bodily history. Augustine's distinction permits both to be genuine goods rather than rivals.

Condensed metaphysical account

Principal efficient cause: God, through Christ's Passion. **Instrumental cause:** the spouses' mutual present consent. **Form / quasi-matter:** words / sensible acts of consenting. **Sacramentum tantum:** external sign. **Res et sacramentum:** bond. **Res tantum:** conjugal grace. **Primary end:** generation and education of children. **Secondary intrinsic ends:** mutual aid / good and sanctification of spouses; remedy / chaste ordering of concupiscence. **Ultimate end:** God's glory and beatitude in the Lamb's wedding.

Limits that govern the entire reading

One flesh is unity of order, life, and bodily relation, not one substance or person. Christ alone saves. Headship never legitimates domination. The primary procreative / educative end is objective orientation, not actual-fertility validity; secondary mutual good is intrinsic, not expendable. In this Latin formulary the blessing does not constitute the sacrament; Eastern Crowning follows its own law. Eucharist is summit, not matter. A ratified and consummated bond ends only at death.

The Propers: Detailed Commentary

The 1962 ritual architecture: covenant brought to the altar

The heading is precisely *Pro sponsis*, “for the spouses.” General Rubrics 121 and 341–343 make it a white votive Mass of II class. Its own text directs that the *Gloria* be said; no *Credo* is said unless an occurring Sunday or octave would require it, although this formulary itself is never admitted on Sunday. The four controlling nuptial rubrics are compact but complete:

Rubric	Control	Boundary / consequence
378	The <i>Pro sponsis</i> Mass—or at least its Collect when the Mass of the day intervenes—is permitted whenever nuptials are celebrated outside closed time, and also within closed time if the Ordinary, for a just cause, permits the solemn blessing.	Celebration of marriage and admission of this Mass / blessing are related questions, not one automatic permission.
379	Beyond days already excluding II-class votives, the formulary is prohibited on every Sunday and whenever the blessing cannot be given under n. 381c.	A permitted marriage does not by itself make the votive formulary available.
380	If the Mass is barred but the blessing allowed, the occurring Mass is used, the Nuptial Collect is added under one conclusion even where n. 343c would otherwise prevent it, and the blessing is given. If both are barred, Mass with blessing may follow on a suitable unimpeded day.	The proper can be impeded, commemorated, or transferred without treating the marriage itself as uncelebrated.
381	The blessing is inseparable from Mass absent Apostolic indult (a); the Mass celebrant gives it even if another priest assisted at the marriage (b); it is omitted when either spouse is absent or, subject to the stated local custom, has already received it (c); All Souls and the Sacred Triduum exclude Mass, commemoration, and blessing (d).	These clauses govern the solemn nuptial blessing, not the validity of consent or every possible pastoral case.

Before this Mass, the governing book for contracting marriage is the 1952 typical edition of the *Rituale Romanum*, Titulus VIII: cap. I gives the preliminaries, cap. II the *Ritus celebrandi Matrimonii sacramentum*, and cap. III the blessing outside Mass available only by Apostolic indult. The 1962 Missal’s n. 381a itself sends the exceptional outside-Mass case to that third chapter. This guide begins at the Mass formulary and uses the Ritual only to mark that handoff. It does not reproduce or adjudicate banns, impediments, delegation, mixed marriage, local language and custom, or present authorization to use earlier books.

The formulary supplies neither a proper Preface nor a referral to another nuptial Common. At the Preface, the seasonal rules in General Rubrics 484–490 and 493–494 control when applicable; otherwise the Common Preface is used under nn. 482 and 498. A later optional Nuptial Preface cannot be imported into this edition.

The nuptial action alters the ordinary sequence three times. After the Pater, before *Libera nos*, the celebrant turns from the Epistle side toward the kneeling spouses and prays *Propitiare* and the long *Deus, qui potestate*. After receiving the Precious Blood, he communicates them. The complete ending is *Ite, missa est; Deus Abraham* over the spouses; admonition; holy-water sprinkling; *Placeat tibi*; general blessing; and the usual Last Gospel beginning of St. John (General Rubrics 507–509). Nothing in this chain may be silently omitted.

What the architecture says without becoming Matrimony's form

The covenant is brought inside the Eucharistic action: after the prayer Christ taught, before sacramental peace and Communion, and under the Church's final sending. This placement interprets married life as received blessing and ecclesial vocation. It does not make the prayers, priest, or Eucharist the efficient sacramental sign of Matrimony; consent has already established the bond.

Tobias and Sarah: mercy in an exiled household (*Int.*)

The Introit is personal and ecclesial at once: *Deus Israel coniungat vos*. It invokes Israel's covenant God over two persons, then remembers mercy shown to *duobus unicis*, two only children. Within Tobit, Sarah's bridal chamber has been marked by death, accusation, and despair; Tobias travels under Raphael's concealed guardianship; both families pray, give thanks, and discover providence acting through vulnerable ordinary means. The Mass begins Christian marriage neither with romance as autonomous destiny nor with anxiety as final word, but with mercy and a petition for fuller praise.

The wording requires textual care. The Roman Introit follows the shorter Vulgate form at Tobit 7:15 and 8:19. Modern Catholic Bibles often follow the longer Greek recension, where the episodes align differently. The missal's citation and text must remain controlling for the proper; the longer recension supplies narrative context, not a replacement quotation.

Bede's *Allegorica interpretatio in Tobiam* supplies sustained medieval reception of Tobit VII–VIII (PL 91:930B–932A). He reads Raguel's careful consent as the nations' reception of the faith, Tobias and Sarah's union as Christ taking the Church from the Gentiles, and the bridal chamber's renunciation and Trinitarian confession as the sequence by which the adversary is expelled and believers are joined to Christ. This is direct exposition of the chapters that furnish the Introit, but not a word-for-word gloss of its two short-Vulgate clauses. Bede's ecclesial allegory therefore opens the literal exiled household toward Christ and the Church without replacing the text's human consent, danger, mercy, and praise.

Tertullian's description of a marriage approved by the Church, confirmed by oblation, sealed by blessing, and lived in one hope and service offers an early Christian analogue (*Ad uxorem* II.8). It illuminates why Tobias's household prayer belongs at Mass, but it is not evidence that the second-century rite was identical to the 1962 formulary.

Introit's complete movement

God of Israel names covenant history. **Join you** assigns principal causality. **Be with you** makes union a common pilgrimage. **Mercy to two only children** remembers threatened lives received as gift. **Make them bless thee more fully** makes praise, not the couple itself, the final liturgical subject.

The Collect and the ministers: office under blessing (*Coll.*)

Quod nostro ministratur officio names a real public act of the Church. *Tua benedictione potius impleatur* refuses to identify ritual competence with supernatural sufficiency. The comparative *potius* places the ministerial action under the divine fulfillment for which it is an instrument.

In a Thomistic account, the spouses' present consent is the proximate instrumental cause of the marriage. Their words are sacramental form; their sensible acts stand in place of the material element familiar in other sacraments (*ST* Suppl., q. 42, aa. 1–3; q. 45, a. 1). The priestly blessing is sacramental and ecclesially decisive for the rite's solemnity, yet not the essence of the bond. Scholastic schools differ in the precise vocabulary of matter and form; this guide presents the Thomistic account rather than turning every detail into a separately defined dogma.

Cause / aspect	Fulfillment here	What it explains	What it excludes
Principal cause	God acting through Christ's Pasch and sacramental institution.	Why blessing can elevate nature and confer grace.	Magic, autonomous consent, or priestly ownership of the spouses' covenant.

Cause / aspect	Fulfillment here	What it explains	What it excludes
Instrumental cause	Mutual, free, present consent of capable spouses.	Why the spouses minister the sacrament to one another.	A merely private contract or a bond imposed without consent.
Formal sign	Words outwardly expressing present consent.	How an interior act becomes sensible and ecclesially knowable.	Treating emotion, consummation, rings, or the nuptial Mass as the essential form.
Bond and grace	A stable relational unity and sacramental help for its acts and ends.	How the sacrament remains after the words and enables a shared vocation.	Fusion of persons, an indelible character, or guaranteed perseverance without cooperation.

Psalm 127: from fear and walking to Israel's peace (*Int., Grad., Tr., Comm.*)

The formulary distributes one psalm across the entire Mass. At entrance the blessed person fears the Lord and walks in his ways. At the Gradual the wife is fruitful vine and the children olive shoots around the table. In penitential seasons the Tract continues to Sion, Jerusalem's goods, generations, and Israel's peace. At Communion it compresses the same arc: God-fearing blessing, descendants, peace. What begins as moral motion becomes household abundance, then ecclesial and eschatological communion.

Augustine's direct exposition refuses to isolate these levels. Many walkers are one because Christ is one; the Church is both spouse and mother; children can signify those born to ecclesial life. Yet he also warns against a crude prosperity reading. Biological descendants are good, but their goodness lies in their being formed well; faithful childlessness is not divine rejection. The psalm's literal blessing is retained and opened toward baptismal fruitfulness and heavenly Jerusalem.

Psalm image	Literal integrity	Ecclesial opening	Pastoral boundary
Fear and ways	Reverent obedience embodied through time.	The baptized walk as members of one Christ.	Fear is filial reverence, not terror or spousal intimidation.
Vine at the house	The spouse and household can bear real bodily and social fruit.	The Church bears children by word and sacrament.	A wife is a person and co-agent, never domestic property or a fertility instrument.
Olives at the table	Children share household nourishment and worship.	Anointing, endurance, and the ecclesial table can resonate typologically.	The text does not make every table image directly Eucharistic.
Sion and peace	Household blessing is received from Israel's sanctuary and people.	The domestic church is ordered to the whole Church's common good.	Family intimacy cannot become sectarian closure or excuse injustice.

The seasonal chants: one blessing under penance and Pasch (*Grad., All., Tr.*)

Outside Paschaltide the Gradual is followed by Psalm 19's Alleluia: help comes *de sancto*, protection from Sion. Augustine interprets the sanctuary christologically as Christ's sanctified Body and links the royal prayer with sacrifice, Cross, Resurrection, and heavenly intercession (*Exposition on Psalm 19/20*). The couple's request is thus ecclesial before it is sentimental.

After Septuagesima the Alleluia is omitted and Psalm 127 becomes the Tract. Its three verses slow the blessing into fear, persevering sight of Jerusalem's good, generations, and Israel's peace. In Paschaltide the Gradual is omitted; Psalm 19 remains as the first Alleluia and Psalm 133 adds blessing from Sion by the maker of heaven and earth. The risen Christ does not release marriage from creation: Paschal newness restores the Creator's purpose and carries it beyond death.

Augustine's direct exposition of Psalm 133 (titled 134), sections 1–3, gives this Paschal verse a demanding moral horizon: God's courts are charity's breadth rather than hatred's confinement; hands lifted by night bless in adversity; praise is contradicted when deeds curse. The Lord blesses from Sion because he makes many one: "be one" to receive the blessing. Augustine comments on the psalm, not the Nuptial Mass; its application to spousal works and unity is editorial.

The Gospel: the Creator's act against the logic of dismissal (*Gosp.*)

Matthew 19 begins with a test: may a man dismiss his wife *quacumque ex causa*? Jesus does not arbitrate between looser and stricter catalogues of causes at their chosen level. He moves behind Deuteronomy's concession to Genesis: one Creator, male and female, leaving and cleaving, two becoming one flesh. The conclusion changes grammatical subject. Human beings do not manufacture an absolutely private arrangement; God joins, and man must not separate.

Chrysostom's *Homily 62 on Matthew* makes the double force explicit. Separation is against nature because one flesh is cut, and against law because what God joined is divided. Yet the same discourse continues immediately to celibacy "to whom it is given." Christ neither absolutizes every social custom surrounding marriage nor makes marriage the only complete Christian life.

St. John Paul II's 1979 catecheses return to the same Gospel from a later historical horizon. He argues that Christ's appeal to the "beginning" is not nostalgia for an inaccessible innocence: historical men and women hear Genesis within the redemption of the body. He then reads one flesh as a chosen communion of persons in which the whole humanity of each spouse is mutually given. This later saintly reception deepens the personal subjectivity of the bond while preserving the Creator's act and the Gospel's indissolubility; it does not replace Matthew's dispute with a modern anthropology.

Aquinas calls marriage a real relation: two persons are ordered to one generation and education and to one common domestic life (*ST* Suppl., q. 44, a. 1). Their unity is therefore neither metaphor alone nor substantial fusion. It is a unity of order embodied in an exclusive relation whose justice and signification require permanence.

Gospel guardrail

The formula *Quod ergo Deus coniunxit* establishes divine authorship and human non-separation; it is not a command to conceal abuse, refuse protection, or confuse civil separation with a declaration that a valid bond never existed. Current law itself distinguishes separation with the bond remaining and recognizes grave mental or physical danger as a legitimate cause for leaving (CIC 1151–1155, especially 1153 §1). This theological guide does not replace competent pastoral or canonical judgment in particular cases.

Ephesians: sacrifice before analogy (*Ep.*)

The lection begins at Ephesians 5:22, but its immediate grammar is prepared by 5:2 and 5:18–21. Christ loves by handing himself over as sacrifice; the Spirit produces psalmody and thanksgiving; all submit to one another in the fear of Christ. The husband's comparison to Christ is therefore a judgment upon self-interest: love must sanctify, nourish, cherish, and give the self for the other's good.

Chrysostom's direct homily presses the consequence: no threats, insults, or violence; honor must be preferred to money; spouses should pray, worship, teach children, and make the house a little church. Some of his social assumptions belong to antiquity, but his Christological center directly resists domination. Aquinas likewise distinguishes governance for common good from rule for private utility and identifies three marital unities: charity, common life, and flesh.

John Paul II begins his 28 July 1982 Ephesians cycle by calling this passage the crown of Christ's words about the beginning, the heart, and resurrection. The analogy is therefore not a frozen allocation of social power. It belongs to the redemption of the body and is governed by mutual subjection in Christ's fear, Christ's saving self-gift, and the Church's holiness. Chrysostom supplies the ascetical household demands, Aquinas the ordered sacramental relation, and John Paul II the personal and redemptive horizon; their emphases converge without becoming one undifferentiated authority.

The wife's relation to the Church is also analogical, not reductive. The Church is responsive because Christ first creates, washes, and gives himself for her; she is a living body of members, not inert matter. A wife possesses equal baptismal dignity, intelligence, freedom, gifts, and direct relation to God. Ephesians' final command makes the husband love as himself and the wife reverence her husband; neither clause permits sin or erases reciprocal obligation.

Sacramentum hoc magnum est

Paul identifies the “great mystery” ultimately with Christ and the Church. Marriage is great by signification because its one-flesh covenant points beyond itself; Catholic tradition also recognizes it as one of seven efficacious sacramental signs. The sign and transcendent reality must remain distinct: the spouses do not reproduce the Pasch, and Christ’s union with his Church does not depend upon their success.

Offertory and Secret: all their times beneath the one oblation (*Off., Sec.*)

Psalm 30’s speaker entrusts not merely a moment but *tempora mea*, the succession of life, to God’s hands. Augustine’s direct exposition reads the psalm through Christ and the whole Church, especially Passion, deliverance, and election; his Psalter’s *sortes meae* differs lexically from the Roman Offertory, so his commentary supplies a Christological horizon rather than exact word study.

At precisely this chant, bread and wine are prepared. The spouses’ embodied future—work, illness, delight, continence, children or childlessness, aging and death—can be offered analogically with the Church. The Secret calls the gift *munus oblatum* for the sacred law of wedlock, then names God *largitor* of the work and asks him to be *dispositor*. Natural capacity, free promise, liturgical gift, providential ordering, and grace are coordinated without confusion.

Tertullian says ecclesial marriage is confirmed by oblation and lived by spouses who pray, fast, worship, and serve together. Aquinas supplies the systematic limit: the Eucharist is principal among the sacraments and their end; Matrimony serves the perfection of the multitude and touches the Eucharistic end by signifying Christ and the Church (*ST* III, q. 65, aa. 2–3). The couple’s self-offering is real moral participation, never another sacramental sacrifice alongside Christ’s.

After the Pater: author, helper, and preservation (*Nupt. I*)

The first nuptial prayer asks God to favor the Church’s supplications and assist his own institutions by which he ordered propagation of the human race. Its final balance deserves exact attention: *quod te auctore iungitur, te auxiliante servetur*. God authors the joining; God helps its preservation. The passive verbs hold the spouses within grace, while *servetur* presupposes the active fidelity named by the final admonition.

Nature and grace are neither rival explanations nor parallel tracks. Generation belongs to living nature and serves continuation of the species; rational generation includes long education, household friendship, political society, and worship. In *SCG* IV.78 Aquinas argues that Christian marriage orders offspring to the worship of God and the Church and, because sacraments effect what they signify, receives grace appropriate to that work. Grace heals desire and will, elevates friendship into charity, and orders temporal goods to beatitude.

The order of ends: children, mutual aid, and beatitude (*Ep., Grad., Nupt. I, Nupt. II, Comm., Final*)

The first prayer after the Pater identifies propagation of the human race as an institution of providence. The Gradual and Communion place spouse, vine, olive shoots, table, generations, and Israel’s peace in one psalmic arc; the long blessing asks for offspring and the final admonition commands diligent Catholic education. In the traditional Latin theology presupposed by this 1962 formulary, these texts manifest marriage’s **primary natural and institutional end: the generation and education of children**. Generation is incomplete without the long work of forming a free person in truth, virtue, worship, and service.

The 1917 Code states that hierarchy at canon 1013 §1, and Pius XI repeats it in *Casti connubii* 17. The same tradition names as **secondary intrinsic ends** mutual aid / the good and mutual perfection of the spouses, together with the remedy or chaste ordering of concupiscence. The Epistle’s sacrificial love, the prayers’ author-helper grammar, love and peace, one bed, mutual fidelity, and conjugal chastity give those secondary ends real liturgical density. Their subordination does not make them optional and cannot justify using a spouse as a means; personal communion shelters, serves, and humanizes the primary end.

Current CIC 1055 §1 and CCC 1601 ordinarily name the spouses’ good and procreation / education together, while CCC 1652 calls children marriage’s “crowning glory” and says the other ends are not diminished. The two vocabularies answer different questions: the older terminology formally ranks objective final causes; the current formulation protects the inseparable personal goods within the one covenant. Neither makes actual conception a validity test: CIC 1084 §3 expressly states that sterility neither prohibits nor nullifies marriage. The covenant’s kind and intention remain ordered to life even where providence does not grant children.

Causal level	Matrimonial reality	Primary / secondary finality	Liturgical disclosure
Outward sign	Present consent under applicable Latin form	Consent establishes a covenant intrinsically ordered to its ends; it does not invent them	Collect and Secret distinguish ministry, divine gift, and providential ordering
<i>Res et sacramentum</i>	The exclusive, enduring bond	Gives stable justice and common life for the reception and education of children and for mutual aid	God joins, preserves, connects, and guards in long peace
<i>Res tantum</i>	Conjugal grace	Heals and elevates primary and secondary ends into parenthood, fidelity, chastity, mutual sanctification, and service	Christ’s Bride, Eucharistic Communion, nuptial petitions, and admonition
Ultimate end	God’s glory, persons, and charity, not the temporal institution as such	Children, spouses, and household are ordered beyond mortal succession to beatitude	Sion, Israel’s peace, heavenly rest, kingdoms, and life without end

Two uses of “form” meet at this Mass but must not collapse. Matrimony’s sacramental form in the Latin analysis is the word / sign of consent; it effects a real bond and conjugal grace without converting either spouse’s human substance. The Eucharistic consecratory form, by contrast, effects conversion of the whole substances of bread and wine into Christ’s Body and Blood while the species remain. Thus covenant and transubstantiation are both real changes under divine causality, but changes of different metaphysical kinds.

The long blessing: salvation history gathered over the spouses (*Nupt. II*)

The prayer’s threefold invocation of *Deus* builds a miniature economy of salvation.

Movement	Appointed language	Doctrinal horizon
Creation	God makes all from nothing, orders the beginnings of the universe, makes man in his image, and forms inseparable help from human flesh.	Contingent being, providential order, equal creaturehood, sexual difference, social unity, and one-flesh indissolubility.
Mystery	God consecrates the conjugal joining to prefigure the sacrament of Christ and the Church in the nuptial covenant.	Natural sign is elevated into an efficacious ecclesial sign under Christ’s Pasch.
Blessing through judgment	The primordial social blessing alone is said to survive both original sin’s penalty and the Flood’s sentence.	Sin wounds but does not annihilate the created good; covenant history preserves and disciplines it.
Petition for the bride	Love and peace, fidelity and chastity, Rachel, Rebecca and Sarah, one bed, heavenly teaching, offspring, innocence.	Primary procreative / educative and secondary unitive / remedial ends are blessed together without losing their order.
Common final end	Both see generations, reach desired old age, the rest of the blessed, and heavenly kingdoms.	Temporal flourishing remains penultimate and is taken into eternal beatitude.

The blessing speaks at greatest length over the bride because of the inherited Roman form; that ritual asymmetry cannot erase the mutual duties stated by Scripture, consent, and the concluding admonition. Rachel, Rebecca, and Sarah are not interchangeable ideals of temperament. They locate this marriage inside the difficult providence of covenant households: fertility and barrenness, migration, conflict, promise, and fidelity carried through weakness.

The blessing joins creation to redemption across sin and Flood. Marriage is neither mere remedy nor self-sufficient: its wounded created good endures under covenant and Christ consecrates it.

Communion and Postcommunion: table, bond, and peace (*Comm., Postcomm.*)

The missal directs the celebrant, after receiving the Precious Blood, to communicate the spouses and continue Mass. Psalm 127 then calls blessed every person who fears the Lord, invokes descendants, and ends with peace upon Israel. Communion locates the couple inside the one Body; it does not canonize the household as self-contained.

The Postcommunion's metaphysics are relational and providential. God accompanies *instituta providentiae tuae* with gracious favor; he *connectis* the spouses in *legitima societate*; he is asked to *custodias* them in *longaeva pace*. Marriage is neither a momentary intention nor a new substance. It is a stable relation and common life whose moral acts remain free, whose peace requires virtue, and whose sacramental grace supplies help without eliminating contingency.

The Eucharist strengthens charity and ecclesial unity, the virtues by which marital works become meritorious. But sacramental reception does not mechanically repair injustice without repentance. The spouses remain responsible to seek reconciliation, protection, counsel, penance, and conversion as needed.

The Abrahamic blessing and final admonition (*Final*)

After the dismissal the celebrant invokes the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Three and four generations represent temporal continuity; *et postea* decisively turns beyond it to eternal life without end. The serious admonition then translates sacramental theology into a rule of life: remain in God's fear, love one another, preserve mutual fidelity and conjugal chastity, and educate children diligently in the Catholic religion. Holy-water aspersion, *Placeat*, the general blessing, and St. John's prologue return this particular rule to the Church's ordinary conclusion of Mass.

The naming makes Christian marriage heir to concrete covenant history rather than a timeless archetype. Education completes the primary end named by propagation; *mutuam fidem* and chastity articulate intrinsic secondary ends that protect persons and household. Formation is not possession of children but service to their natural and supernatural good, while the completed end sequence refuses to stop with temporal descendants: Christ is the helper toward life without end.

Cross-sacramental economy

Baptism forms the washed Bride and makes children adopted heirs. **Confirmation** strengthens household witness. **Eucharist** nourishes charity and is the rite's liturgical end. **Penance** restores truth and forgiveness. **Anointing** accompanies weakness and death. **Orders** serves the ecclesial Body. **Matrimony** serves it primarily through generation and education, secondarily through mutual aid and chaste communion. All are ordered through Christ to final beatitude.

Marriage, continence, and the teleological end of all things

Marriage and consecrated continence name two modes of bodily discipleship. Augustine calls both goods while distinguishing their signs: marriage signifies the enduring unity of Christ and the Church through fidelity in time; continence anticipates directly the resurrection where no one marries. The higher eschatological sign does not make marriage evil, and marriage's sacramentality does not make continence defective.

Aristotle sees generation as a mortal creature's participation, as far as possible, in continuity and even in the divine; Christian revelation both receives and judges that natural teleology. No succession of descendants defeats death. The final blessing therefore moves from generations to eternal life, and the long blessing from old age to heavenly kingdoms. Creation's generative good reaches its proportionate natural ends, while grace carries persons beyond species-continuity into vision of God.

Revelation 19 and 21 give the final horizon: the Lamb's marriage supper and the New Jerusalem descending as Bride. The Church's nuptial future is the consummation of creation, covenant, Incarnation, Cross, Resurrection, sacrament, household holiness, and cosmic renewal. Earthly marriage serves that end precisely by not claiming to be it.

The Propers: Notable and Quotable

- **Gospel, Matthew 19:6** — National Archives, “Let No Man Put Asunder: Freedmen’s Bureau Marriage Records” (2008 / online 2012). The marriage formula becomes the title of Reginald Washington’s workshop on federal records of marriages involving formerly enslaved people during Reconstruction. A prohibition against severing a bond is redirected toward an archive that lets descendants recover bonds slavery had denied, disrupted, or left poorly documented; the title is evocative, not proof that every recorded union has the same history.
- **Gospel, Matthew 19:6** — E. D. E. N. Southworth, *Her Mother’s Secret*, ch. XX, “The Wedding Day” (1910). At the ceremony’s final warning, a woman pushes up the aisle and answers that “them as the devil has joined together a woman may put asunder”—and will do so in “double-quick time.” The melodramatic interruption reverses God / devil and man / woman to turn the solemn formula into a comic weapon against a coerced, fraudulent match.
- **Offertory, Psalm 30:16** — sundial, Friends’ Meeting House, Bournville (1905). “My times are in Thy hand” is carved above a stone vertical dial on the building’s south gable. The psalm’s surrendered future becomes an instrument’s timekeeping motto: sunlight and moving shadow measure the very hours that the inscription declares finally held elsewhere, a material conjunction especially apt for a meeting house rather than a printed devotional page.

The Propers: Interpretive Possibilities

These are bounded AI-assisted editorial discovery proposals, attributed to none of the cited authorities. Each joins precisely named appointed elements by a stated mechanism; none claims historical selection intent, universal novelty, or doctrinal authority.

A vulnerable dyad becomes a covenantal public. (*Int., Gosp., Comm.*) The Introit’s *duos unicos filios* names two exposed persons; the Gospel’s *erunt duo in carne una* gives their union a created form; Communion then widens the horizon to descendants and *pax super Israel*. The mechanism is a change of scale—two endangered lives, one flesh, generations, a people’s peace. Read element by element, one can miss that intimacy here becomes more, not less, accountable as it becomes exclusive. The proposal can train spouses to test private choices by children’s good, ecclesial communion, and public peace. It neither guarantees children nor dissolves the couple into the community, and it does not claim that Tobit or Psalm 127 was selected to encode this arc.

Entrusted time becomes prudence under providence. (*Off., Sec., Postcomm.*) The Offertory places *tempora mea* in God’s hands; the Secret names him both source and *dispositor* of the work; the Postcommunion asks him to *custodias* the spouses in long peace. The mechanism moves from surrendered chronology, through divine ordering, to guarded duration. Separate readings yield three petitions; their sequence discloses a discipline for decisions whose consequences cannot be mastered. Its spiritual and pastoral fruit is neither prediction nor passivity, but patient prudence: deliberate, promise, repent, and persevere without treating control as fidelity. The proposal does not make every event a decipherable divine message, excuse negligence, or turn providence into fate; creaturely freedom and contingency remain real.

The night watch becomes a household rule. (*All., Final*) The Paschal Alleluia places servants in the Lord's house by night, lifting hands toward the holy place; the final admonition names fear of God, mutual love, fidelity, chastity, and diligent formation of children. The connecting mechanism is a translation from cultic posture to durable practice: hands raised when sight is poor become the works by which a household keeps praise from contradicting life. Read separately, the psalm can remain a beautiful vigil and the admonition a list; together they expose fidelity's hidden hours. The fruit is a concrete examen for illness, fatigue, conflict, and unnoticed care. This is not a secret nuptial sense in Psalm 133, and neither every "night" nor Augustine's exposition is a prediction about marital crisis.

The sanctuary educates the household table. (*Grad., All., Comm.*) The Gradual places spouse and olive shoots around the household *mensa*; the ordinary Alleluia locates help in Sion; Communion brings the spouses to the sacramental table and ends with Israel's peace. The mechanism is a spatial procession—home, sanctuary, altar, people—that orders domestic abundance toward ecclesial gift. Element-by-element reading can miss that the household table is neither self-validating nor discarded: it is educated into thanksgiving, hospitality, forgiveness, and care for those without a table. The proposal's practical fruit is to make Eucharistic reception judge the household's use of food, time, and welcome. The tables are analogous, not identical; *mensa* is not a covert name for the altar, and a family is not the whole Church.

Fruitfulness widens without becoming optional. (*Coll., Grad., Comm., Final*) The Collect asks for propagation; the Gradual names vine, olive shoots, and household table; Communion reaches children's children and Israel's peace; the final blessing passes from generations to life without end. The mechanism is progressive enlargement: bodily generation opens into education, social and ecclesial peace, and an eschatological end that no genealogy can produce. Read separately, either biology or eternity can swallow the middle; the full sequence preserves procreative ordering while refusing to reduce fruitfulness to a head count. This gives pastoral room to honor adoption, demanding service, and spiritual fruit when children do not arrive, without treating openness to life as optional or a child as owed. The later magisterial analogue controls this application; the Collect itself does not explicitly name non-biological fruitfulness.

Sacramental Appendix — Matrimony at a Glance

One-flesh covenant elevated into an efficacious sign

A baptized man and woman joined for children and their education, mutual aid, and the glory of the Lamb

Identity	Definition and fulfillment			
Definition	An eligible man and woman freely establish an irrevocable whole-life covenant; between baptized persons it is sacramental and ordered to spouses' good and children.			
Institution	Created in the beginning, restored by Christ, honored at Cana, made a sign of Christ's self-gift for the Church (Gen. 1–2; Matt. 19; Eph. 5).			
Structure	<i>Sacramentum tantum</i> : Latin consent / applicable form; Eastern consent with sacerdotal Crowning. <i>Res et sacramentum</i> : bond. <i>Res tantum</i> : conjugal grace.			
Ends	Primary : generation / education of children. Secondary, intrinsic : spouses' mutual aid / sanctification; remedy / chaste ordering of concupiscence. Ultimate : God's glory and the Lamb's wedding. Fertility is not validity.			
Condition	Metaphysical / ritual fulfillment	Ordinary order	Extraordinary case or limit	
Matter / form	Latin analogy: visible consent as quasi-matter; present words / signs as form. East: consent with sacerdotal Crowning.	Consent indispensable; priest / bishop receives and blesses in East.	Persons are not inert matter; consummation completes, not constitutes.	
Minister	Latin: baptized spouses confer; cleric assists. East: priest / bishop ministers Crowning (CCC 1623).	Eastern minister receives consent, invokes Spirit, crowns.	CCEO 832 necessity: witnesses; call a priest if possible and seek blessing. CCEO 834 §2 retains priestly blessing in mixed marriage.	
Subject	One free, capable, eligible man and woman; both baptized for sacramentality.	Form and disposition serve lawful, fruitful reception.	Force / grave fear, incapacity, bond, exclusion, antecedent perpetual impotence invalidate; sterility does not.	
Effect	Exclusive bond; grace for fidelity, sanctification, parenthood, education.	Eucharist, Penance, prayer, virtue sustain covenant.	No character. Nonconsummated: CIC 1142; ratified-consummated: death alone (1141).	
Axis	Creation / covenant	Christ and Pasch	Church and other sacraments	Last end
Covenant	Image, one flesh, Israel, Tobit.	Christ restores the beginning, honors Cana, gives himself for the Bride.	Baptism makes sacramental; Eucharist crowns; Penance heals the domestic Church.	Persons / charity enter the Lamb's wedding.
Goods	<i>Proles, fides, sacramentum</i> : children, fidelity, permanence; mutual good.	Cross makes authority self-gift; violence contradicts.	Openness is orientation, not guaranteed fertility; love serves the common good.	Temporal sign yields to God's dwelling.
Witness class	Principal loci	Controlling claim		
Scripture	Gen. 1–2; Tob. 8; Matt. 19; John 2; Eph. 5; Rev. 19; 21	Creator joins; Christ restores / elevates; Paschal self-gift points to the Lamb.		
Fathers	Augustine, <i>De bono coniugali</i> 24; <i>Tractates on John</i> 120; Chrysostom, <i>Ephesians</i> 20; Tertullian, <i>Ad uxorem</i> II.8	Children, fidelity, bond are goods; Bride comes from Christ's side; home serves.		
Thomas / Church	Supplement, qq. 41–42, 49; Trent XXIV; CCC 1618–1666; CIC 1055–1165; CCEO 776–866	Consent indispensable; Eastern blessing causal; grace perfects ordered ends and bond.		

Do not confuse

One flesh is not fusion; headship not domination; Latin assistance not Eastern ministry; sterility does not invalidate, antecedent perpetual impotence does; primary does not mean spouse-as-means; Eucharist is summit, not form; separation is not dissolution.

Appendix: Scope and Qualifications

Text. The complete 1962 formulary, seasonal variants, three nuptial prayers, and full ending were collated with pp. [75]–[77]; General Rubrics 121, 341–343, 378–381, 482, 484–490, 493–494, 498, and 507–509 control admission, Preface, and conclusion. The 1952 Ritual’s title and Tit. VIII handoff were verified through official documentary notices, not a complete facsimile. **Direct reception.** Tobit VII–VIII; Psalms 19, 30, 127, and 133; Matthew 19; Ephesians 5, with patristic, medieval, and later saintly witnesses distinguished. **Limits.** Current authorization to use earlier books, local marriage rites, Tobit’s recensions, Psalm origins, New Testament composition, precise scholastic matter/form terminology, and typological reach remain outside or expressly qualified. Public and open sources do not exhaust manuscripts, untranslated patristic texts, subscription literature, or modern critical scholarship. **Full records.** `propers/verified.md`; `research/scope.md`.

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