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MARRIAGE LAW  
AND  
CHURCH REGULATIONS



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# The Chief

Journal of The Civil Service

## NEW MARRIAGE LAW

CHAP. 742.

AN ACT to amend the domestic relations law, by providing for marriage licenses.  
Became a law, July 26, 1907, with the approval of the Governor. Passed, three-fifths being present.

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Section two of chapter two hundred and seventy-two of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-six, entitled "An act relating to the domestic relations, constituting chapter forty-eight of the general laws," is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2. **Incestuous and void marriages.**—A marriage is incestuous and void whether the relatives are legitimate or illegitimate between either:

1. An ancestor and a descendant; or,
2. A brother and sister of either the whole or the half blood.
3. An uncle and niece or an aunt and nephew.

If a marriage prohibited by the foregoing section be solemnized it shall be void, and the parties thereto shall each be fined not less than fifty nor more than one hundred dollars and may, in the discretion of the court in addition to said fine, be imprisoned for a term not exceeding six months. Any person who shall knowingly and wilfully solemnize such marriage, or procure or aid in the solemnization of the same, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be fined or imprisoned in like manner.

Sec. 2. The schedule of sections at the beginning of article two of such chapter is hereby amended to read as follows:

### ARTICLE II.

#### Solemnization, Proof and Effect of Marriage.

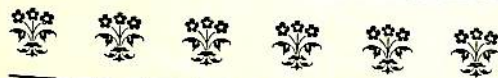
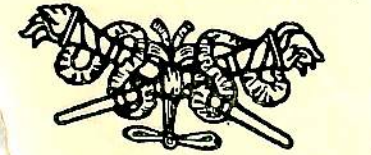
- Section 5. Marriage a civil contract.
6. By whom a marriage must be solemnized.
7. Marriage, how solemnized.
- Section 8. Marriage licenses.
9. Town and city clerk to issue licenses; form.
10. Duty of town and city clerks.

COMPLIMENTS OF

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NEW YORK CITY



THIS BOOK is sent to you for review and any notice advice or suggestion you may wish to give relative to it will be gratefully received. ¶ ¶ ¶ ¶ ¶ ¶ ¶

THE TEXT BOOK DEPARTMENT  
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11. False statements and affidavits.
12. Clergyman or officer violating act; penalty.
13. Clergyman or officer, when protected.
14. Records to be kept by town and city clerks.
15. Records to be kept by county clerk.
16. Blank books and forms to be furnished.
17. Penalty for violation.
18. Presumptive evidence.
19. Effect of marriage of parents of illegitimates.
20. License, when to be obtained.

Sec. 3. Section ten of such chapter, as amended by chapter three hundred and thirty-nine of the laws of nineteen hundred and one is hereby renumbered section five, and amended to read as follows:

Sec. 5. **Marriage a civil contract.**—Marriage, so far as its validity in law is concerned, continues to be a civil contract, to which the consent of the parties capable in law in making a contract is essential.

Sec. 4. Section eleven of such chapter, as amended by chapter three hundred and thirty-nine of the laws of nineteen hundred and one, chapter five hundred and twenty-two of the laws of nineteen hundred and two and chapter four hundred and ninety-nine of the laws of nineteen hundred and five, is hereby renumbered section six and amended to read as follows:

Sec. 6. **By whom a marriage must be solemnized.**—The marriage must be solemnized by either:

1. A clergyman or minister of any religion, or by the leader, or either of the two assistant leaders of the society for ethical culture in the city of New York.
2. A mayor, recorder, alderman, police justice or police magistrate of a city; or
3. A justice or judge of a court of record or of a municipal court, or a justice of the peace; or
4. A written contract of marriage signed by both parties and at least two witnesses who shall subscribe the same, stating the place of residence of each of the parties and witnesses and the date and place of marriage and acknowledged by the parties and witnesses in the manner required for the acknowledgment of a conveyance of real estate to entitle the same to be recorded, provided, however, that all such contracts of marriage must in order to be valid be acknowledged before a judge of a court of record. Such contract shall be recorded within six months after its execution in the office of the clerk of the county in which the marriage was solemnized. The word "clergyman" when used in the following sections of this article, includes each person referred to in the first subdivision of this section. The word "magistrate" when so used, includes any person referred to in the second or third subdivision.

Sec. 5. Section twelve of such chapter is hereby renumbered section seven, and amended to read as follows:

Sec. 7. **Marriage, how solemnized.**—No particular form or ceremony is required when the marriage is solemnized as herein provided, by a clergyman or magistrate, but the parties must solemnly declare in the presence of a clergyman or magistrate and the attending witness or witnesses that they take each other as husband and wife. In every case, at least one witness beside the clergyman or magistrate must be present at the ceremony. The preceding provisions of this chapter, so far as

they relate to the manner of solemnizing marriages, shall not affect marriages among the people called friends or quakers; nor marriages among the people of any other denominations having as such any particular mode of solemnizing marriages; but such marriages must be solemnized in the manner heretofore used and practiced in their respective societies or denominations, and marriages so solemnized shall be as valid as if this article had not been enacted.

Sec. 6. Sections thirteen, fourteen and fifteen of such chapter, sections sixteen and seventeen of such chapter, as amended by chapter three hundred and thirty-nine of the laws of nineteen hundred and one, section eighteen of such chapter, as amended by chapter seven hundred and twenty-five of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-nine, and section nineteen of such chapter, as added by chapter three hundred and thirty-nine of the laws of nineteen hundred and one, are hereby repealed, and new sections are added to article two thereof to be sections eight to twenty thereof, both inclusive, to read as follows:

Sec. 8. **Marriage licenses.**—It shall be necessary for all persons intending to be married to obtain a marriage license from the town or city clerk of the town or city in which the woman to be married resides and to deliver said license to the clergyman or magistrate who is to officiate before the marriage can be performed. If the woman or both parties to be married are non-residents of the state such license shall be obtained from the clerk of the town or city in which the marriage is to be performed.

9. **Town and city clerks to issue marriage licenses; form.**—The town or city clerk of each and every town or city in this state is hereby empowered to issue marriage licenses to any parties applying for the same who may be entitled under the laws of this state to contract matrimony, authorizing the marriage of such parties, which license shall be substantially in the following form:

#### STATE OF NEW YORK,

County of.....

City or town of.....

Know all men by this certificate that any person authorized by law to perform marriage ceremonies within the state of New York to whom this may come, he, not knowing any lawful impediment thereto, is hereby authorized and empowered to solemnize the rites of matrimony between.....of.....in the county of.....and state of New York and.....of.....in the county of.....and state of New York and to certify the same to be of.....and either of them under this hand and seal in his ministerial or official capacity and thereupon he is required to return his certificate in the form hereto annexed.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said town or city at.....this.....day of.....nineteen.....Seal. The form of the certificate annexed to said license and therein referred to shall be as follows:

I,.....a.....residing at.....in the county of.....and state of New York do hereby certify that I did on this.....day of.....in the year A. D., 19.. of.....in the county of.....and state of New York, solemnize the rites of matrimony between.....of.....in the county of.....and state of New York and.....of.....in the county of.....and state of New York in the presence of.....and.....as witness and the license therefor is hereto annexed.



Witness my hand at.....in the county of.....this  
.....day of.....A. D., 19.... In the presence of  
.....  
.....

The license issued and the certificate duly signed by the person who shall have solemnized the marriage therein authorized shall be returned by him to the office of the town or city clerk who issued the same on or before the tenth day of the month next succeeding the date of the solemnizing of the marriage therein authorized and any person or persons who shall wilfully neglect to make such return within the time above required shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not less than twenty-five dollars or more than fifty dollars for each and every offense.

**Sec. 10. Duty of town or city clerk.**—It shall be the duty of the town or city clerk when an application for a marriage license is made to him to require each of the contracting parties to sign and verify a statement or affidavit before such clerk or one of his deputies, containing the following information. From the groom: Full name of husband, color, place of residence, age, occupation, place of birth, name of father, country of birth, maiden name of mother, country of birth; number of marriage. From the bride: Full name of bride, place of residence, color, age, occupation, place of birth, name of father, country of birth, maiden name of mother, country of birth, number of marriage. The said clerk shall also embody in the statement, if either or both of the applicants have been previously married, a statement as to whether the former husband or husbands or the former wife or wives of the respective applicants are living or dead, and as to whether either or both of said applicants are divorced persons, if so, when and where the divorce or divorces were granted and shall also embody therein a statement that no legal impediment exists as to the right of each of the applicants to enter into the marriage state. The town or city clerk is hereby given full power and authority to administer oaths and may require the applicants to produce witnesses to identify them or either of them and may also examine under oath or otherwise other witnesses as to any material inquiry pertaining to the issuing of the license. If it appears from the affidavits and statements so taken, that the persons for whose marriage the license in question is demanded are legally competent to marry the said clerk shall issue such license, except in the following cases: If it shall appear upon an application of the applicants as provided in this section that the man is under twenty-one years of age or that the woman is under the age of eighteen years, then the town or city clerk before he shall issue a license shall require the written consent to the marriage from both parents of the minor or minors or such as shall then be living, or if the parents of both are dead, then the written consent of the guardian or guardians of such minor or minors. If there is no parent or guardian of the minor or minors living to their knowledge then the town or city clerk shall require the written consent to the marriage of the person under whose care or government the minor or minors may be before a license shall be issued. The parents, guardians or other persons whose consents it shall be necessary to obtain before the license shall issue, shall personally appear before the town or city clerk and execute the same if they are residents of the state of New York and physically able so to do. If they are non-residents of the state and required consents may be executed and duly acknowledged without the state but the consent with a certificate attached showing the authority of the officer to take acknowledgments must be duly filed with the town

or city clerk before a license shall issue. Before issuing any license herein provided for, the town or city clerk shall be entitled to a fee of one dollar, which sum shall be paid by the applicants before or at the time the license is issued; and all such fees so received by the clerks of cities shall be paid monthly to the treasurer of the city wherein such license is issued. Any town or city clerk who shall issue a license to marry any persons one or both of whom shall not be at the time of the marriage under such license legally competent to marry without first requiring the parties to such marriage to make such affidavits and statements or who shall not require the procuring of the consents provided for by this act, which shall show that the parties authorized by said license to be married are legally competent to marry, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction thereof shall be fined in the sum of one hundred dollars for each and every offense.

**Sec. 11. False statements or affidavits.**—Any person who shall in any affidavit or statement required or provided for in this act wilfully and falsely swear in regard to any material fact as to the competency of any person for whose marriage the license in question or concerning the procuring or issuing of which such affidavit or statement may be made shall be deemed guilty of perjury and on conviction thereof shall be punished as provided by the statutes of this state.

**Sec. 12. Clergyman or officer violating act; penalty.**—If any clergyman or other person authorized by the laws of this state to perform marriage ceremonies shall solemnize or presume to solemnize any marriage between any parties without a license being presented to him or them as herein provided or with knowledge that either party is legally incompetent to contract matrimony as is provided for in this act, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty dollars nor more than five hundred dollars or by imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

**Sec. 13. Clergyman or officer; when protected.**—Any such clergyman or officer as aforesaid to whom any such license duly issued may come and not having personal knowledge of the incompetency of either party therein named to contract matrimony, may lawfully solemnize matrimony between them.

**Sec. 14. Records to be kept by town and city clerks.**—Each town and city clerk hereby empowered to issue marriage licenses shall keep a book in which he shall record and index all affidavits, statements, consents and licenses, together with the certificate attached showing the performance of the marriage ceremony, which book shall be kept and preserved as a part of the public records of his office. On or before the fifteenth day of each month the said town and city clerk shall file in the office of the county clerk of the county in which said town or city is situated the original of each affidavit, statement, consent, license and certificate, which have been filed with or made before him during the preceding month. He shall not be required to file any of said documents until the license is returned with the certificate showing that the marriage to which they refer has been actually performed.

**Sec. 15. Records to be kept by the county clerk.**—The county clerk of each county shall record and index in a book kept in his office for that purpose each statement, affidavit, consent and license together with the certificate thereto attached showing the performance of the marriage ceremony filed in his office. During the first twenty days of the month of January, April, July and October of each year the county clerk shall transmit to the state department of health at Albany, New York, a copy of all affidavits, statements, consents and licenses with certificates attached filed in his office during the three months preceding the date



of said report, also copies of all contracts of marriage made and recorded in his office during said period entered into in accordance with subdivision four of section six of this chapter, which said record shall be kept on file and properly indexed by the state department of health. The services rendered by the county clerk in carrying out the provisions of this act shall be a county charge except in counties where the county clerk is a salaried officer, in which case they shall be a part of the duties of his office.

**Sec. 16. Forms and books to be furnished.**—Blank forms for marriage licenses and certificates and also the proper books for registration ruled for the items contained in said forms and also blank statements and affidavits and such other blanks as shall be necessary to comply with the provisions of this act shall be prepared by the state board of health and shall be furnished by said department at the expense of the state to the county clerk of the various counties of the state in the quantities needed from time to time, and the county clerk of each county shall distribute them to town and city clerks in their respective county in such quantities as their necessities shall require. The expense of distributing the same to said town and city clerks is hereby made a county charge.

**Sec. 17. Penalty for violation.**—Any town, city or county clerk who shall violate any of the provisions of this act or shall fail to comply therewith shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall pay a fine not exceeding the sum of one hundred dollars on conviction thereof.

**Sec. 18. Presumptive evidence.**—Copies of the records of marriages, including the license and certificate of marriage and all other records pertaining thereto duly certified by the clerk of the county where the same are recorded under his official seal, shall be evidence in all courts.

**Sec. 19. Effect of marriage of parents of illegitimates.**—All illegitimate children whose parents have heretofore intermarried, or who shall hereafter intermarry, shall thereby become legitimized and shall become legitimate for all purposes and entitled to all the rights and privileges of legitimate children; but an estate or interest vested or trust created before the marriage of the parents of such child shall not be divested or affected by reason of such child being legitimized. Nothing in this act shall be deemed or construed to in any manner impair or affect the validity of any lawful marriage contract made before the passage of this act.

**Sec. 20. When to be obtained.**—The provisions of this act pertaining to the granting of the licenses before a marriage can be lawfully celebrated apply to all persons who assume the marriage relation in accordance with subdivision four of section six of this act. Nothing in this act contained shall be construed to render void by reason of a failure to procure a marriage license any marriage solemnized between persons of full age nor to render void any marriage between minors or with a minor under the legal age of consent where the consent of parent or guardian has been given, and such marriage shall be for such cause voidable only as to minors or a minor upon complaint of such minors or minor or the parent or guardian thereof.

**Sec. 21.** This act shall take effect January first, nineteen hundred and eight.

### HOW TO OBTAIN A LICENSE.

Those desiring to contract marriage and who under the law are eligible must obtain the necessary license from the town or city clerk of the

town or city in which the prospective bride resides. Those who reside in the Boroughs of Manhattan and Bronx must apply at the City Hall. Those who reside in the Borough of Brooklyn must apply at the Borough Hall. The couple seeking the license are required to sign the following affidavit, and both parties must swear to the accuracy of the statements made:

10-1-01-3-0,000 (21-5531)

## STATE OF NEW YORK

### Affidavit for License to Marry

STATE OF NEW YORK  
County of \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ applicants for a license for marriage, being severally sworn, depose and say, that to the best of their knowledge and belief the following statement respectively signed by us is true, and that no legal impediment exists as to the right of the applicants to enter into the marriage state.

FROM THE GROOM.	FROM THE BRIDE:
Full name _____	Full name _____
Color _____	Color _____
Place of residence _____	Place of residence _____
Age _____	Age _____
Occupation _____	Occupation _____
Place of birth _____	Place of birth _____
Name of father _____	Name of father _____
Country of birth _____	Country of birth _____
Maiden name of mother _____	Maiden name of mother _____
Country of birth _____	Country of birth _____
Number of marriage _____	Number of marriage _____
Former wife or wives living or dead _____	Former husband or husbands living or dead _____
Is applicant a divorced person _____	Is applicant a divorced person _____
If so, when and where divorce or divorces were granted _____	If so, when and where divorce or divorces were granted _____

\_\_\_\_\_  
GROOM  
\_\_\_\_\_  
BRIDE  
Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk



## MARRIAGE LICENSE CERTIFICATE.

The City Clerk, if satisfied with the answers given, issues to the couple a certificate which authorizes any clergyman or other person legally empowered to officiate, to marry the parties named in the certificate. Attached to this certificate is a blank record form which must be returned to the City Clerk by the clergyman or other person who has solemnized the marriage.

16-1-07-400,000 (21-4-117)

PLACE OF REGISTRY

County of \_\_\_\_\_

City or Town of \_\_\_\_\_

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Bureau of Vital Statistics

CERTIFICATE AND RECORD OF MARRIAGE

Registered No. \_\_\_\_\_

*I* know all Men by this Certificate, that any person authorized by law to perform marriage ceremonies within the State of New York to whom this may come, he, not knowing any lawful impediment thereto, is hereby authorized and empowered to solemnize the rites of matrimony between \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York and to certify the same to be said parties or either of them under his hand and seal in his ministerial or official capacity and thereupon he is required to return his certificate in the form hereto annexed.

*In Testimony Whereof*, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said town or city at \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ one thousand nine hundred and \_\_\_\_\_.

SEAL

CLERK

I, \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ residing at \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York do hereby certify that I did on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year A. D., 190 \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York solemnize the rites of matrimony between \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York in the presence of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as witnesses and the license therefor is hereto annexed.

*Witness* my hand at \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A. D., 190 \_\_\_\_\_.

In the presence of \_\_\_\_\_

(Signatures of Witnesses)

(Signature of Person Performing Ceremony)

## CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_, who have hereto subscribed \_\_\_\_\_ name, do hereby consent that \_\_\_\_\_ who is \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Minor) (My or Our Son, Daughter or Ward), and who is under the age of \_\_\_\_\_ years, shall be united in marriage to \_\_\_\_\_ by any minister of the gospel or other person authorized by law to solemnize marriages.

Witness my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A. D. \_\_\_\_\_

(Parents or Guardians' Signatures)

## TO CLERGYMEN AND MAGISTRATES

The license and certificate duly signed by the person who shall have solemnized the marriage therein authorized shall be returned by him to the office of the town or city clerk who issued the same on or before the tenth day of the month next succeeding the date of the solemnizing of the marriage therein authorized and any person or persons who shall wilfully neglect to make such return within the time above required shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not less than twenty-five dollars or more than fifty dollars for each and every offense.



## NEW MARRIAGE REGULATIONS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

New regulations governing marriage have been adopted by the Catholic Church and couples of that faith intending to marry should carefully read the same in order to be prepared to carry out their provisions. These regulations have been promulgated by Archbishop Farley in the following official communication to the clergy of the archdiocese:

Archbishop's House, 452 Madison Avenue.

Reverend Dear Father:

The new legislation of the Church on Christian Marriage, contained and prescribed in the Decree "Ne Temere" of the S. Congregation of the Council, issued August 2, 1907, to which the attention of the Rev. Clergy was called at the Diocesan Synod in November last, is hereby formally promulgated in this diocese to go into effect on Easter Sunday next, April 19, 1908.

This action of the Church is but another striking example of the wise and prudent policy she adopts with regard to the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony, ever investing this sacred union of man and woman with solemnity of law and form, timely and suitable to conserve the dignity and protect the sanctity of the marriage state. Christ has placed in the keeping of the Church the seven Sacraments; and of the seven, Matrimony is most exposed to suffer from men and women, perversion of its noble purpose through carnal passion, desecration of its sanctity by marital infidelity, and violation of its life-binding union by divorce.

Christian Marriage is no mere contract entered into for sensual, social, or mercenary advantage, and dissoluble when the advantage ceases. It is a union holy and inviolable unto death. Those joined in Christian wedlock assume an intimate relation with the Creator who instituted this manner of co-operation with Him for the propagation of the human family. Nor is this all. Our Blessed Saviour segregated in the sanctuary of the Sacraments this sacred contract from all other contracts and conventions made by man; and so holy, perpetual, and binding was the bond of marriage in His eyes that He deigned to make it typify the union existing between Himself and His Spouse, the Church, against which union even the gates of hell will never prevail.

The sanctity, unity, and indissolubility of marriage are based upon the divine law made known to man in the primitive revelation as contained in Genesis, and in the fuller revelation of the Gospel preached by the Redeemer. Marriage, therefore, in every Christian land, fundamentally and primarily belongs, by every principle of law, to the jurisdiction of the Church.

Neither the law of the land, nor popular education, nor culture, nor high station, has any sanction sufficient to safeguard marriage from the unspeakable dangers that threaten the life of the family. The unchecked and ever-growing evil of divorce is but a symptom of the malignity of the lamentable disease that is undermining the moral strength, the virile character and the rugged decency we look for in our national life.

It is to conscience that the appeal must be made, if we seek and desire a remedy. Religion alone can awaken the conscience and arouse the

sense of responsibility to God, the Supreme Lawgiver, who instituted the first marriage in the union of one man and one woman, and commanded, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" and "Thou shalt not covert thy neighbor's wife." The Catholic Church has thundered from her altars against the evil; and, in season and out of season, to millions within her fold, and to hundreds of thousands without, who, though not of the faith, admire the position of the Church on the question of marriage, she preaches the doctrine of Christ, who alone can bless with stability, sanctify with honor, and protect with divine grace the family and the home.

Nearly thirty years ago (1880), Leo XIII., of blessed memory, acclaimed to the world the famous Encyclical "Arcanum," which contains a most lucid and comprehensive exposition of the fundamental principles of Christian Marriage; and Pius X., through the S. Congregation of the Council, in order to make most practical these principles at the present hour, issues the decree "Ne Temere," which (1) changes the discipline of the Church with regard to "Sponsalia" (betrothal); (2) modifies the "Tametsi" decree of the Council of Trent affecting clandestine nuptials, and (3) provides for a more perfect registration of marriage.

An authorized translation of the decree "Ne Temere" will be found on page 10 of this pamphlet. Please study it carefully in conjunction with the following observations, in order to explain clearly to your people the new legislation on Marriage.

It is to be noted, first of all, that it is not our intention to reserve to the pastors sole jurisdiction over Marriage in their respective parishes. Every assistant priest appointed to parochial work is to exercise validly in the parish to which he has been assigned, authority over marriage similar to that invested in the pastor, except where by special delegation the pastor may receive extraordinary faculties for particular cases or circumstances. The assistant priests, however, will bear in mind that it is not becoming for them to grant authority to priests of other dioceses to perform the marriage ceremony in this diocese, or give permission to the faithful to marry outside their own parish or the diocese; these matters should be left to the pastors. The consent of the pastor is necessary that the assistant may, on any occasion, officiate licitly at marriage in the parish.

### SPONSALIA.

As Sponsalia, i. e., prenuptial engagement or betrothal, may involve serious obligations, and especially the diriment impediment of "Honestas Publica," the Church desires to remove all doubt which may arise, and hence legislates that in future (after Easter) Sponsalia, to be valid and canonical, shall be drawn up in writing duly signed by the parties contracting Sponsalia and attested by proper witnesses. According to the new law:

1. A written contract must be signed by both the parties to the contract; and if either, or both, cannot write, the name (x) mark must be placed on the contract, indicating the illiteracy.
2. The signature of one witness is sufficient, if the witness be the Ordinary of the place, or the parish priest; but if either or both the parties to the contract cannot write, an additional witness who can write is required to attach signature.
3. The signature of two witnesses is essential, if the Ordinary of the place, or the parish priest, does not sign; these two witnesses need not be ecclesiastics; they may be laymen; in case either or both parties to the contract cannot write, three witnesses are required who will attach their signatures.

This new legislation does not impose on people about to marry any



obligation to make these formal prenuptial engagements in writing and before witnesses as a prerequisite for marriage. They may be married as hitherto after a simple verbal promise of marriage given to each other.

### VALID MARRIAGES.

The new law requires for the validity of marriage, on and after Easter, these essential conditions:

1. That every marriage be contracted before the Ordinary or the parish priest (or a priest duly delegated), provided the Ordinary or the parish priest has jurisdiction over the place in which the marriage is performed.

2. That every marriage be contracted in the presence of at least two witnesses besides the priest officiating.

3. That the presence of the priest having jurisdiction be voluntary, and that he ask and receive the consent of the parties contracting marriage.

It follows then, as far as this diocese is affected in the matter of validity:

a. Every priest of this diocese having faculties can validly assist at marriage within the limits of his own parish, and can marry validly, with people from other parishes and dioceses, provided there be no diriment impediment. A marriage performed by a priest (without being duly delegated) outside the limits of his own parish, is null and void.

b. Neither a priest of another diocese, nor a clergyman having only a diocesan jurisdiction, without having first secured the requisite delegation from the Ordinary, or the parish priest.

c. The presence of only one witness to the marriage will render the marriage null and void. No qualification is prescribed in the decree for the witnesses. A minor who has reached the years of discretion, or a non-Catholic, may be a witness.

### LICIT MARRIAGES.

A valid marriage is not necessarily licit, or lawful, i. e., one performed in full conformity with the law. In addition to the essentials absolutely demanded for the validity, the Church wisely prescribes certain other formalities to be complied with, in order to provide a safe and dignified procedure for pastor and people on the occasion of marriage. The following is to be noted for this diocese:

1. The priest arranging for the marriage is under obligation to make serious inquiry to satisfy his conscience that the parties presenting themselves are free from every canonical impediment, and, if from another diocese, bear with them letters *liberi status*.

2. The priest performing the ceremony should marry only his own parishioners, i. e., those who are members of his parish by reason of one month's residence, at least, within the parochial limits.

3. Whenever strangers, i. e., those who are not parishioners by right of one month's residence, present themselves, the priest needs the explicit permission of the pastor, or Ordinary, of the bride; and if there be good reason for not asking the permission of the bride's pastor, or Ordinary, then permission of the groom's pastor or Ordinary should be obtained. A case of grave necessity excuses from the obligation of seeking permission of the pastor or Ordinary of either party; but a

priest, in such a case, should consult his own Ordinary through the Chancery.

4. The marriage should be performed, as a general rule, by the pastor of the bride, unless some reasonable cause excuses. It is to be noted that our practice, sanctioned by the Synodal Statutes (*Collectio Synd. No. 189, page 107*), can no longer be followed, viz.: "*Dum inituri Matrimonium diversi sunt districtus, ab alterutro Rectore nuptiae celebrari possunt.*"

5. Whenever strangers, having no fixed abode (*vagi*) present themselves for marriage in this diocese, no priest should presume to officiate at the ceremony until our permission to do so is obtained through the Chancery, unless the necessity to marry the couple immediately be so pressing and urgent as to make delay inadvisable.

### EXTRAORDINARY CASES.

The new Decree provides for certain exceptional circumstances which may possibly arise:

1. When neither the Ordinary nor the pastor can be had, and danger of death is imminent to either or both the parties, a marriage may be contracted validly and licitly before any priest and two witnesses, if the death-bed marriage be necessary to relieve the conscience, and legitimize any offspring there may be.

2. If neither Ordinary nor the pastor can be had, and this difficulty should last for a month in any one place, marriage may be validly and licitly contracted by formal declaration of consent made by the contracting parties in the presence of two witnesses, without any priest assisting.

### NEW REGISTRATION OF MARRIAGE.

1. The Decree "*Ne Temere*" states clearly the obligation in conscience of keeping carefully the parish register of marriages, in which every marriage contracted in the parish must be accurately recorded at once after the ceremony. The record should contain date of the ceremony, the names of the parties contracting marriage, of the witnesses and of the parish priest performing the ceremony, and a marginal memorandum of any dispensation that may have been obtained and executed; and also a notice of the transmission of marriage record to place of baptism of each party. On the pastor devolves the duty of entering the record whenever a priest of another parish or diocese officiate in the parish.

Every priest of the diocese should appreciate that he is bound *sub gravi* to enter in the parish register every marriage performed by him. The omission of one marriage through culpable negligence is a grave matter, not only a serious violation of precept, but a grave injustice to the couple married.

2. The Decree "*Ne Temere*" imposes an altogether new obligation and further duty on the pastor, namely, of entering in the register of baptisms the marriage record of every person baptized in his parish who shall marry after Easter. If one, or both, parties were baptized in a parish other than that of the marriage, the pastor marrying the couple must see to it, that a transcript of the marriage record be sent to the pastor of the parish in which the parties were baptized, whether the place of baptism be in his own diocese, or another diocese, or a foreign country. Obligation on the pastor is obvious to inquire where and when each of the contracting parties were baptized.



3. The transmission of the marriage record to the place of baptism may be done by sending it either directly to the pastor of the place of baptism, or indirectly to him through the Chancery of his diocese, or through the Chancery of the transmitter.

### SUBJECTS OF THE NEW LEGISLATION.

The prescriptions of the Decree "Ne Temere" affect the following persons:

1. All persons baptized in the Catholic Church, whether in infancy or adult age.
2. All persons converted to the Catholic faith from heresy or schism.
3. All persons baptized in the Catholic Church, or converted to the Catholic faith, who may have fallen away from the Church.

### MIXED MARRIAGES.

The Decree "Ne Temere" effects a very radical change in our present discipline with regard to Mixed Marriages, which, after Easter, will not be valid unless contracted before a priest having jurisdiction over marriage in the place in which the marriage ceremony is performed. Even when a dispensation has been obtained from "mixta religio" or "disparitas cultus," the marriage, in order to be valid, must be performed by a priest having such jurisdiction. As the Decree says, "the same laws are binding also on the same Catholics as above, if they contract sponsalia or marriage with non-Catholics."

### NON-CATHOLIC MARRIAGES.

"Non-Catholics, whether baptized or unbaptized, who contract among themselves, are nowhere bound to observe the Catholic form of sponsalia or marriage."

You will please communicate the subject of this letter to your people at all the Low Masses on Sunday, March 15th, and read the entire letter at the High Mass and Vespers on the same Sunday; and also take other opportune occasions before Easter to impress on the faithful this very important change in the law of marriage.

Praying for you and your devoted flock every blessing, I am,  
Faithfully yours in Christ,

JOHN,  
Archbishop of New York.

N. B.—Briefly, the faithful should know that, on and after Easter Sunday:

1. No marriage will be valid unless it is performed by a priest duly authorized and before at least two witnesses.
2. A marriage performed between two Catholics, or between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic, by a civil magistrate, alderman, notary public, or Protestant minister, will be null and void. Hitherto such marriages were valid.
3. No marriage will be licit unless it is performed by the pastor of the bride, or by a priest delegated by him or the Bishop of the diocese.
4. Those of the faithful who are of marriageable age, or who may be contemplating marriage in the near future, should secure positive and correct information as to the date and place of their baptism.

### CHURCH MARRIAGE CEREMONIES.

How the Catholic Church regards marriage is shown by the following instructions; and ritual published by order of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore.

### THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY. INSTRUCTIONS.

The holy state of Matrimony was instituted by Almighty God in the beginning of the world, and under the law of nature had a particular blessing annexed to it. God created man to His own image: to the image of God He created them: male and female He created them. And God blessed them, saying, Increase and multiply, and fill the earth (Gen. i. 27, 28). Under the Mosaic law the Almighty more distinctly announ- ced its dignity and obligations. Afterwards, under the Christian law, our Divine Redeemer sanctified this state still more, and from a natural and civil contract raised Matrimony to the dignity of a Sacrament. And St. Paul declared it to be a representation of that sacred union which Jesus Christ had formed with His spouse the Church. This mystery is great, but I say in Christ, and in the Church (Ephes. v. 32).

Seeing, therefore, that this state is so very holy, and instituted for such great and holy ends, and, moreover, that it has so great a grace annexed to it (when the Sacrament of Matrimony is worthily received) as to put the married couple into the way of being happy both in this world and in the world to come, they who intend to enter into this state ought to proceed with the greatest prudence and make the best possible preparation, that they may obtain these precious and abundant graces from Almighty God.

1. They ought to enter into this holy state with the pure intention of promoting the honor and glory of God, and the sanctification of their own souls.

2. They ought to select a person of their own religion; experience shows that a want of union in faith between husband and wife is frequently attended with the worst consequences, both to themselves and to their children. A Catholic cannot, without special dispensation, lawfully marry a person of another religion; and if, for good reason, such marriage is permitted, the Catholic party cannot enter into an agreement that any of the children shall be brought up in any other than the Catholic faith, and the non-Catholic party must make beforehand a positive and solemn promise, 1st, that no obstacle of any kind shall be put in the way of the practice of all Catholic duties by the Catholic party; and, 2d, that all the children who shall be born to them shall be baptized and brought up as Catholics.

3. They must obtain the pardon of their sins by worthily approaching the Sacrament of Penance, and then sanctify their marriage by the fervent reception of the Holy Communion.

4. The Marriage should be celebrated in the morning, and with a Nuptial Mass. That this is the constant and universal and emphatic desire of Holy Church, the following quotations from the Decrees and from the Pastoral Letter of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore very clearly show:

Let those who have the cure of souls take every occasion earnestly to exhort the faithful to the keeping of that pious and praiseworthy



custom of the Church whereby Marriages are celebrated, not in the night-time, but during Mass, and accompanied by the Nuptial Blessing. . . . This custom is held to be not merely a commendable but quite a necessary one, now in these present days, when the foes of religion are leaving nothing untried in their efforts to deprive, if possible, Holy Matrimony of all sanctity, and of all likeness to a Sacrament, and to degrade it to the level of a mere civil contract. [Decrees, N. 125.]

Let them enter into marriage only through worthy and holy motives, with the blessings of religion, especially with the blessing of the Nuptial Mass. [Pastoral Letter, p. 87.]

5. They ought frequently to reflect on their duties and obligations as inculcated in the word of God.

St. Paul, strongly inculcating these duties by the great example of Christ and His Church, says:

Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord; because man is head of the woman, as Christ is Head of the Church; Himself is Saviour of His body. But as the Church is subject to Christ, so also women to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also hath loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it. . . . So, also, the men ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh, but he nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ the Church. . . . For this cause man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This mystery is severally each love his wife, as he loveth himself: and let the wife fear her husband (Ephes. v. 22, etc.).

## IMPEDIMENTS TO MARRIAGE.

From the earliest ages holy Church has annexed certain conditions to the matrimonial contract, which are called **Impediments**. They are of two kinds: 1. **Annuling Impediments**, or those which, without special dispensation, make a marriage null and void from the beginning; 2. **Prohibitory Impediments**, which, without dispensation, make a marriage unlawful and sinful, though not invalid.

### I. THE ANNULING IMPEDIMENTS.

1. **Consanguinity**. This forbids marriage between third cousins or any nearer degree of kindred.

2. **Affinity**. By this it is forbidden to marry the third cousin, or any nearer blood-relation, of a deceased husband or wife. **Spiritual Affinity** is a species of relationship, contracted by means of the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, whereby parents cannot marry the sponsors of the child, or the person who baptized it; nor can sponsors marry their godchildren.

3. **Public Honesty**. This prohibits marriage with a parent, child, brother, or sister of a person with whom a valid **engagement to marry** has existed.

4. **Crime**. Persons (of whom one at least must be already married) who are guilty of homicide or adultery with a view to a subsequent marriage cannot marry each other.

5. **Difference of Worship**. This renders marriage null and void between a baptized and an unbaptized person.

6. **Vows**. This makes marriage impossible to all persons who have made solemn vows by entering into a Religious Order; and to all the Orders of the Clergy, from Subdeacons upward.

7. **Clandestinity**. Wherever the decree of the Council of Trent concerning Matrimony has been published, marriage between two Catholics is not only unlawful but invalid without the presence of the Parish Priest and two witnesses. This decree is in force in the following places in the United States: 1. The Province of New Orleans. 2. The Province of San Francisco, and Utah Territory except the part lying east of the Colorado River. 3. The Province of Santa Fe, except the northern part of Colorado Territory. 4. The Diocese of Vincennes. 5. The city of St. Louis, and the parishes of St. Genevieve, St. Ferdinand, and St. Charles in the Diocese of St. Louis. 6. The parishes of Kaskaskia, Cahokia, French Village, and Prairie du Rocher, in the Diocese of Alton.

8. **The Bond of a Previous Marriage**. This is an Impediment which death alone can remove. What, therefore, God hath joined together let not man put asunder (Matt. xix. 6). No court, no judge, no legislature, no power on earth, can break the bond which unites husband and wife. For certain just causes, especially for the crime of adultery, they may live separately, but they are still married and cannot marry again. Let it be remembered that no so-called Divorce, no guilt, no desertion, can ever sever the marriage bond. Nothing but a **certain knowledge** of the death of one party can make it lawful for the other to marry.

### II. THE PROHIBITORY IMPEDIMENTS.

1. A simple Vow to preserve chastity, to enter the priesthood or into a Religious Order.
2. A previous valid engagement to marry any person.
3. Impediments arising from a Prohibition of the Church, such as



(1) the solemnization of marriage (in other words, to marry with outward pomp and festivity) during Advent or Lent. (2) Mixed marriages—the union of a Catholic with one who is not a Catholic. (See paragraph 2 in "Instructions" above.)

4. The non-consent of parents, when consent is withheld for good and just reasons.

In addition to these, there are a few other impediments which are not generally likely to occur. With regard to all such matters it is very important to consult the Priest when arranging for the marriage.

### THE PUBLICATION OF THE BANNS.

In order to place a check upon clandestine marriages, to discover any impediments which may exist, to prevent deceptions and surprises, to afford parents and others interested an opportunity to interpose, if needful, and in order to procure the prayers of the faithful that God may give light, grace, and prosperity to the contracting parties, the Council of Trent has decreed that the promise of marriage be published on three successive Sundays or Holydays, at the principal Mass, by the Parish Priest of the parties (Sess. 24).

This is a very important law, and imposes very serious obligations. Bishops can, and for good and sufficient reason do, dispense with this law. Catholics should remember that it is a mortal sin to marry unless such dispensation is procured or the Banns published in regular form. There can be no doubt that if any one knows of an impediment in the way of a proposed marriage, he is in duty bound to reveal it.

### PRAYER OF ONE ABOUT TO BE MARRIED.

O Gracious Father, who dost bless us by Thy bounty, pardon us by Thy mercy, support and guide us by Thy grace, and govern us by Thy providence: I give Thee humble and hearty thanks for all the mercies which I have received at Thy hands in time past. And now, since Thou hast called me to the holy estate of marriage, be pleased to be with me in my entering into it and passing through it, that it may not be a state of temptation or sorrow to me by occasion of my sins or infirmities, but of holiness and comfort, of love and dutifulness, as Thou hast intended it to be to all that love and fear Thy holy name. Amen.

### THE RITUAL FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MATRIMONY.

The Priest, vested in a surplice and white stole (but vested as for Mass, yet without maniple, if the Nuptial Mass is to follow), attended by an acolyte holding a vessel of holy water, asks, in the vernacular, in the hearing of two or three witnesses, the man and the woman separately, as follows, concerning their consent. And first he asks the Bridegroom, who must stand at the right hand of the Bride:

N., wilt thou take N., here present, for thy lawful wife, according to the Rite of our holy Mother the Church?

R. I will.

Then the Priest asks the Bride:

N., wilt thou take N., here present, for thy lawful husband, according to the Rite of our holy Mother the Church?

R. I will.

The consent of one is not sufficient; it should be expressed by both, and there should be some sensible sign thereof. Having obtained this mutual consent, the Priest bids the man and woman join their right hands.

[In places where it is customary, the man and woman pledge themselves one to the other as follows, repeating these words after the Priest:

The man first says:

I, N.N., take thee, N.N., for my lawful wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.

Then the woman says after the Priest:

I, N.N., take thee, N.N., for my lawful husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.]

The priest then says:

I join you together in marriage, in the name of the Father, \* and Bride.

[In some places the Bridegroom says after the Priest:

With this ring I thee wed, and I plight unto thee my troth.]

The Priest then says:

In the name of the Father, \* and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

This done, the Priest adds:

V. Confirm, O God, that which Thou hast wrought in us of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

He then sprinkles them with holy water.

This done, the Priest blesses the ring, saying:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.  
R. Who hath made heaven and earth.  
V. O Lord, hear by prayer.  
R. And let my cry come unto Thee.  
V. The Lord be with you.  
R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Bless, \* O Lord, this ring, which we bless \* in Thy name, that she who shall wear it, keeping faith unchanged with her husband, may abide in peace and obedience to Thy will, and ever live in mutual love. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Then the Priest sprinkles the ring with holy water, in the form of a cross; and the Bridegroom, having received the ring from the hand of the Priest, places it on the third finger of the left hand of the

R. From Thy holy temple which is in Jerusalem.  
R. Lord, have mercy.  
V. Christ, have mercy.  
V. Lord, have mercy.



Our Father (inaudibly).  
 V. And lead us not into temptation.  
 R. But deliver us from evil.  
 V. Save Thy servants.  
 R. O my God, who put their trust in Thee.  
 V. Send them help, O Lord, from Thy holy place.  
 R. And defend them out of Zion.  
 V. Be unto them, O Lord, a tower of strength.  
 R. From the face of the enemy.  
 V. O Lord, hear my prayer.  
 R. And let my cry come unto Thee  
 V. The Lord be with you.  
 R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Look down, we beseech Thee, O Lord, upon these Thy servants, and graciously protect this Thine ordinance, whereby Thou hast provided for the propagation of mankind; that those who are joined together by Thine authority may be preserved by Thy help. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## REGULATIONS AND CEREMONIES OF THE PROTESTANT-EPISCOPAL CHURCH

### CANON 13.

#### Of Marriage and Divorce.

Sec. 1. If any persons be joined together otherwise than as God's Word doth allow, their marriage is not lawful.

Sec. 2. No Minister, knowingly after due inquiry, shall solemnize the marriage of any person who has a divorced husband or wife still living, if such husband or wife has been put away for any cause arising after marriage; but this Canon shall not be held to apply to the innocent party in a divorce for the cause of adultery, or to parties once divorced seeking to be united again.

Sec. 3. If any Minister of this Church shall have reasonable cause to doubt whether a person desirous of being admitted to Holy Baptism, or to Confirmation, or to the Holy Communion, has been married otherwise than as the Word of God and discipline of this Church allow, such Minister, before receiving such person to these ordinances, shall refer the case to the Bishop for his godly judgment thereupon: **Provided,** however, that no Minister shall, in any case, refuse the Sacraments to a penitent person in imminent danger of death.

### THE FORM OF SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY

The laws respecting Matrimony, whether by publishing the Banns in Churches, or by License, being different in the several States, every Minister is left to the direction of those laws, in everything that regards the civil contract between the parties.

And when the Banns are published, it shall be in the following form: I publish the Banns of Marriage between M. of—, and N. of—. If any of you know cause, or just impediment, why these two persons should not be joined together in holy Matrimony, ye are to declare it. This is the first [second or third] time of asking.

At the day and time appointed for Solemnization of Matrimony, the Persons to be married shall come into the body of the Church, or shall be ready in some proper house, with their friends and neighbors; and there standing together, the Man on the right hand, and the Woman on the left, the Minister shall say:

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this company, to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony; which is an honorable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church: which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence and first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galilee, and is commanded of Saint Paul to be honorable among all men: and therefore is not by any to be entered into



unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Into this holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. If any man can show just cause, why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace.

And also speaking unto the Persons who are to be married, he shall say:

I require and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any impediment, why ye may not be lawfully joined together in Matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured, that if any persons are joined together otherwise than as God's Word doth allow, their marriage is not lawful.

The Minister, if he shall have reason to doubt of the lawfulness of the proposed Marriage, may demand sufficient surety for his indemnification: but if no impediment shall be alleged, or suspected, the Minister shall say to the Man:

M. wilt thou have this Woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor, and keep her in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

The man shall answer,  
I will.

Then shall the Minister say unto the Woman:

M. wilt thou have this Man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou obey him, and serve him, love, honor, and keep him in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?

The Woman shall answer,  
I will.

Then shall the Minister say:

Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?

Then shall they give their troth to each other in this manner. The Minister receiving the Woman at her father's or friend's hands, shall cause the Man with his right hand to take the Woman by her right hand, and to say after him as followeth:

I, M., take thee, N., to my wedded Wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth.

Then shall they loose their hands; and the Woman with her right hand taking the Man by his right hand, shall likewise say after the Minister:

I, N., take thee, M., to my 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, cherish, and to obey, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth.

Then shall they again loose their hands; and the Man shall give unto the Woman a Ring. And the Minister taking the Ring shall deliver it unto the Man, to put it upon the fourth finger of the Woman's left hand. And the Man holding the Ring there, and taught by the Minister, shall say:

With this Ring I thee wed, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then, the Man leaving the Ring upon the fourth finger of the Woman's left hand, the Minister shall say,

Let us pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our tresspasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

O Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life; Send thy blessing upon these thy servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in thy name; that, as Isaac and Rebecca lived faithfully together, so these persons may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant betwixt them made, (whereof this Ring given and received is a token and pledge), and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then shall the Minister join their right hands together, and say:

Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

Then shall the Minister speak unto the company:

Forasmuch as M. and N. have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have given and pledged their troth, each to the other, and have declared the same by giving and receiving a Ring, and by joining hands; I pronounce that they are Man and Wife, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

And the Minister shall add this Blessing:

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. Amen.