**Wedding Party**

|  |
| --- |
| **Celebrant** |
| *Name* |
|  |
| **Chief Bridesmaid** | **Best Man** |
| *Name* | *Name* |
|  |  |
| **Bridesmaids** | **Groomsmen** |
| *Name* | *Name* |
| *Name* | *Name* |
|  |  |
|  | **Flower Girl***Name* **Page Boy***Name* **Readers***Name* *Name* **Prayer of the Faithful***Name* *Name**Name**Name**Name**Name***Reflection***Name* **Music** |  |
| *Name* |

**Entrance**

**![MCj03293070000[1]]()**

**The Introductory Rite**

The Greeting

Fr. Charlie In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Fr. Charlie The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All **And with your spirit.**

**Ceremony of Light**

**![MCj03293070000[1]]()**

*Briide and Grooom each light a candle as a sign of their individual lives which will soon become one in the bond of marriage.*

**Gloria**

All **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,**

**we give you thanks, for your great glory,**

**Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**Opening Prayer**

Fr. Charlie Let us Pray.

 Father, hear our prayers for *Briide* and *Grooom*

who today are united in marriage before your altar.

Give them your blessing, and strengthen their love for each other. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All **Amen.**

**Liturgy of the Word**

**First Reading:** *Name*

 **A reading from the book of Ruth**

Wherever you go, I will go.

Wherever you live, I will live.

Your people will be my people.

Your God will be my God too.

Wherever you die I will die.

And there I shall be buried beside you.

We shall be together forever.

And our love will be the gift of our life

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm**

**![MCj03293070000[1]]()**

*You Are Mine*

**Second Reading:** *Name*

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**

 Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous;

 Love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful.

 Love takes no pleasure in other people’s sins but delights in the truth; It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes. Love does not come to an end.

 This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God**

**Gospel Acclamation**

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*Alleluia*

Fr. Charlie The Lord be with you.

All **And with your spirit.**

Fr. CharlieA reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (2:1-11)**

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” Jesus said, “Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” There were six stone jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water”, and they filled them to the brim. “Draw some out now,” he told them, “and take it to the steward.” They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from – only the stewards who had drawn the water knew – the steward

called the bridegroom and said: “People generally serve the best wine first, and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you have kept the best wine till now.” This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him.

Fr. Charlie The Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Homily**

**Rite of Marriage**

Fr. Charlie Dear children of God, you have come to this Church so that the Lord may seal your love in the presence of the priest, and this community. Christ blesses this love. He has already consecrated you in baptism; now by a special sacrament He strengthens you to fulfil the duties of your married life.

*Briide* and *Grooom* you are about to celebrate this sacrament.

Have you come here of your own free will and choice and without compulsion to marry each other?

**Both: We have.**

Fr. Charlie Will you love and honour each other in marriage all the days of your life?

**Both: We will.**

Fr. Charlie Are you willing to accept with love the children God may send you and bring them up in accordance with the law of Christ and His Church?

**Both: We are.**

**Declaration of Consent**

Fr. Charlie I invite you then to declare before God and His Church your consent to become husband and wife.

*Grooom***: I,** *Grooom***, take you** *Briide* **as my wife,**

 **for better, for worse,**

 **for richer, for poorer,**

 **in sickness and in health,**

 **all the days of our life.**

*Briide***: I,** *Briide* **take you** *Grooom* **as my husband,**

 **for better, for worse,**

 **for richer, for poorer,**

 **in sickness and in health,**

 **all the days of our life.**

Fr. Charlie What God joins together, let nobody separate. May the Lord confirm the consent that you have given and enrich you with his blessings.

**Blessing of the Rings**

Fr. Charlie Lord, bless *Briide* and *Grooom*, and consecrate their married life. May these rings be a symbol of their faith in each other and a reminder of their love. Through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

*Grooom***:** *Briide***, wear this ring as a sign of our faithful love. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

*Briide***:** *Grooom***, wear this ring as a sign of our faithful love. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

**Candle Ceremony**

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*Briide and Grooom light a single candle from their individual candles to signify their new life together as a couple.*

Fr. Charlie Now that *Briide* and *Grooom* have given themselves to each other, let us ask God, our father to keep all married couples faithful to him and united in themselves.

**Prayer for the Newly Married Couple this is optional**

**Both:** **We thank you Lord and we praise you for bringing us to this happy day. You have given us to each other, now together, we give ourselves to you.**

 **We ask you Lord make us one in our love, keep us one in your peace, protect our marriage, bless our home, make us gentle, keep us faithful, and when life is over, unite us again where parting is no more in the Kingdom of your love. There we will praise you in the happiness and peace of our eternal home.**

**Prayer of the Faithful**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Name*:*All:**Name*:*All:**Name*:*All:**Name*:*All:**Name*:*All:**Name*:*All:* | We pray for *Briide* and *Grooom* who are now united in marriage. May God keep them in his care and may He bless their world with health and happiness. Lord hear us.**Lord graciously hear us.**We pray for the parents, families and friends of *Briide* and *Grooom* who have offered them support and unconditional love throughout their lives. May they continue to offer love and friendship as they begin their special journey. Lord hear us**Lord graciously hear us.**We pray for our relatives and friends who have departed from this life. We pray especially for ……………… may God unite us again in the joys of heaven. Lord hear us.**Lord graciously hear us.**We pray that all who are sick or suffering may be restored to health and wholeness according to God’s will. We pray for the gifts of life and good health which we so often take for granted. May we always appreciate these gifts and may they bring us closer to god. Lord hear us.**Lord graciously hear us.** *Briide* and *Grooom* thank God for their wonderful friends. We pray for all those who are lonely and that they may know the joy of friendship. Lord hear us.**Lord graciously hear us.** We pray for married couples everywhere, that their lives will be an example to the world of unity, fidelity and love. Lord hear us.**Lord graciously hear us.**  |

**The gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar by… usually but not always the two mothers**

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**

 **Offertory Procession**

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Fr. Charlie Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.

All **Blessed be God forever.**

Fr. Charlie Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.

All **Blessed be God forever.**

**Prayer Over the Gifts**

Fr. Charlie Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

All **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands**

**for the praise and glory of His name, for our good, and the good of all His holy Church.**

Fr. Charlie Lord, hear our prayers and accept the gifts we offer for *Briide* and *Grooom*

Today you have made them one in the sacrament of marriage. May the mystery of Christ’s unselfish love, which we celebrate in this Eucharist, increase their love for you and for each other.

 We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

**The Eucharistic Prayer**

Fr. Charlie The Lord be with you.

All **And with your spirit.**

Fr. Charlie Lift up your hearts.

All **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Fr. Charlie Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right and just.**

Fr. Charlie It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,

always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you have forged the covenant of marriage as a sweet yoke of harmony and an unbreakable bond of peace, so that the chaste and fruitful love of holy Matrimony may serve to increase the children you adopt as your own.

By yopur providence and grace, O Lord, you accomplish the wonder of this twofold design, that, whilke the birth of choildren brings beauty to the world, their rebirth in Baptism gives increase to the Church, through Christ our Lord.

And so, with the Angels and all the Saints

we declare your glory,

All **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Fr. Charlie You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fountain of all holiness. Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray,

by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the time he was betrayed

and entered willingly into his Passion,

he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it,

and gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT, FOR THIS IS MY BODY,

WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended,

he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks,

he gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT, FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT, WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

Fr. Charlie The mystery of faith.

All **My Lord and my God.**

Fr. Charlie Therefore, as we celebrate

the memorial of his Death and Resurrection,

we offer you, Lord,

the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,

giving thanks that you have held us worthy

to be in your presence and minister to you.

Humbly we pray that,

partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ,

we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.

Remember, Lord, your Church,

spread throughout the world,

and bring her to the fullness of charity,

together with Leo our Pope, Francis our Bishop and all the clergy.

Be mindful also Lord of *Briide* and *Grooom* whom you have brought to their wedding day so that by your grace, keep them always in mutuial love and peace.

Remember also our brothers and sisters,

who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection, and all who have died in your mercy:

welcome them into the light of your face.

Have mercy on us all, we pray,

that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,

with the blessed Apostles,

and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages,

we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life,

and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the holy spirit, all glory and honour is yours, forever and ever.

All **Amen.**

**Communion Rite**

Fr. Charlie At the Saviour’s command and formed by divine teaching,

we dare to say:

All **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 trespasses**

**As we forgive those who trespass against us;**

**And lead us not into temptation,**

**But deliver us from evil.**

**Or**

 **Ár n-Athair atá ar Neamh,**

 **Go naofar d’ainm,**

 **Go dtagfadh do ríocht,**

 **Go ndéantar do thoil,**

 **ar an talamh mar a dhéantar ar neamh.**

 **Ár n-arán laethúil tabhair dúinn inniu,**

 **agus maith dúinn ár bhfiacha**

 **mar a mhaithimidne dár bhféichiúna féin.**

 **agus ná lig sinn i gcathú,**

 **ach soar sinn ó olc, Amen**

**Nuptial Blessing**

P. Let us ask God to bless *Briide* and *Grooom* now married in Christ and unite them in His love through the sacrament of his body and blood.

 Father, by your plan man and woman are united, and married life has been established as the one blessing that was not forfeited by original sin or washed away in the flood. Look with love upon this woman, your daughter, now joined to her husband in marriage. She asks your blessing. Give her the grace of love and peace, May she always follow the example of the holy women whose praises are sung in the scriptures. May her husband put his trust in her and recognize that she is his equal and the heir with him to the life of grace. May he always honour her and love her as Christ loves his bride, the Church.

 We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All **Amen.**

P. The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All **And with your spirit.**

P. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

 May this mingling of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.

All **Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.**

P. Behold the Lamb of God,

behold him who takes away the sins of the world.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All **Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

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**Prayer After Communion**

P. Let us pray. *(All pray in silence)*

 Lord, We who have shared the food of your table

 pray for our friends *Briide* and *Grooom*

 whom you have joined together in marriage.

 Keep them close to you always.

 May their love for each other

 proclaim to all the world their faith in you.

 We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

**Communion Reflection This is optional**

*Read by Name*

Now you feel no rain,

for each of you will be a shelter to the other.

Now you feel no cold,

for each of you will be warmth to the other.

Now there is no loneliness,

for each of you will be a companion to the other.

You are two bodies,

but there is one life before you and one home.

When evening falls,

each will look up and the other will be there.

He’ll take her hand; she will take his

and you’ll turn together

To look at the road you travelled to reach this:

the hour of your happiness.

It stretches behind you, even as the future lies ahead,

a long and winding road, whose every turning

means discovery.

Old hopes, new laughter, shared fears.

Your adventure has just begun.

*‘The Apache Wedding Blessing’*

**The Blessing**

P. The Lord be with you.

All **And with your spirit.**

P. The Lord Jesus was present at the wedding in Cana: today may he bless you and your families and friends.

All **Amen.**

P. He loved his Church to the end; may he fill your hearts to overflowing with his love.

All **Amen.**

1. May he give you the grace to bear witness to his resurrection, and look forward to his coming with hope and joy.

All **Amen.**

P. May the peace of Christ ever dwell in your home. May the angels of God protect it, and may the Holy family of Nazareth be its model and inspiration.

All **Amen.**

P. May Almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All  **Amen.**

P. Go forth, the Mass is ended.

All **Thanks be to God.**

**Signing of the Marriage Register**

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**Recessional**

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**BELOW ARE SOME FURTHER CHOICES FOR SCRIPYURE READINGS THESE ARE THE OFFICIAL ONES… JUST A LITTLE HINT… THE CEREMONY WILL BE SHORTER IF THE READINGS ARE…**

**FIRST READING**

Some suggestions for the First Reading from the Old Testament…

A reading from the Book of Sirach (26: 1-4)

A loving partner is a safe shelter, whoever finds one has found a rare treasure. A loving partner is something beyond price, there is no measuring their worth. A loving partner is a life-saving remedy, and those who respect their Lord find true love. For as a person is, so is their loved one.

The word of the Lord.

A Reading from the Book of Ruth (1:16-17)

Wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you live, I will live. Your people shall be my people and your God will be my God too. Wherever you die, I will die and there will I be buried beside you. We shall be together forever and our love will be the gift of God.

The word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Genesis (1:26-28. 31)

God said, ‘Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.’

God created man in the image of himself,

in the image of God he created him,

male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, ‘Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.’ God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Genesis (2:18-24)

The Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate.’ So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him. So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed:

‘This at last is bone from my bones,

and flesh from my flesh!

This is to be called woman,

for this was taken from man.’

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Genesis (24:48-51. 58-67)

Abraham’s servant said to Laban, ‘I blessed the Lord, God of my master Abraham, who had so graciously led me to choose the daughter of my master’s brother for his son. Now tell me whether you are prepared to show kindness and goodness to my master; if not, say so, and I shall know what to do.’

Laban and Bethuel replied, ‘This is from the Lord; it is not in our power to say yes or no to you. Rebekah is there before you. Take her and go; and let her become the wife of your master’s son, as the Lord has decreed.’ They called Rebekah and asked her, ‘Do you want to leave with this man?’ ‘I do,’ she replied. Accordingly they let their sister Rebekah go, with her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men. They blessed Rebekah in these words:

‘Sister of ours, increase

to thousands and tens of thousands!

May your descendants gain possession

of the gates of their enemies!’

Rebekah and her servants stood up, mounted the camels, and followed the man. The servant took Rebekah and departed.

Isaac, who lived in the Negeb, had meanwhile come into the wilderness of the well of Lahai Roi. Now Isaac went walking in the fields as evening fell, and looking up saw camels approaching. And Rebecca looked up and saw Isaac. She jumped down from her camel, and asked the servant ‘Who is that man walking through the fields to meet us? The servant replied, ‘That is my master’; then she took her veil and hid her face. The servant told Isaac the whole story, and Isaac led Rebecca to his tent and made her his wife; and he loved her. And so Isaac was consoled for the loss of his mother.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Tobit (8:4-8)

The parents meanwhile had gone out and shut the door behind them. Tobias rose from the bed, and said to Sarah, ‘Get up, my sister! You and I must pray and petition our Lord to win his grace and his protection.’ She stood up, and they began praying for protection, and this was how he began: ‘You are blessed, O God of our fathers; blessed, too, is your name for ever and ever. Let the heavens bless you and all things you have made for evermore. It was you who created Adam, you who created Eve his wife to be his help and support; and from these two the human race was born. It was you who said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make him help mate like himself”. And so I do not take my sister for any lustful motive; I do it in singleness of heart. Be kind enough to have pity on her and on me and bring us to old age together.’ And together they said, ‘Amen, Amen’,

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the Song of Songs (2:8-10,14,16; 8:6-7)

I hear my Beloved.

See how he comes

leaping on the mountains,

bounding over the hills.

My Beloved is like a gazelle,

like a young stag.

See where he stands

behind our wall.

He looks in at the windows,

He peers through the lattice.

My beloved lifts up his voice,

he says to me,

‘Come hen, my love,

my lovely one, come.

My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock.

In the covert of the cliff,

Show me your face,

let me hear your voice;

for your voice is sweet,

and your face is beautiful.’

My beloved is mine and I am his.

Set me as a seal upon your heart,

as a seal on your arm.

For love is strong as Death,

Jealousy relentless as Sheol.

The flash of it is a flash of fire,

a flame of the Lord himself.

Love no flood can quench, no torrents drown.

The word of the Lord.

A Reading from the Song of Songs (2:10-14, 16)

My beloved lifts up his voice,

he says to me,

‘Come then, my love,

my lovely one, come.

For see, winter is past,

the rains are over and gone.

The flowers appear on earth.

The season of glad songs has come,

the cooing of the turtledove is heard

in our land.

The fig tree is forming its first figs

and the blossoming vines give out their fragrance.

Come then, my love,

my lovely one, come.

My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock.

In the covert of the cliff,

Show me your face,

let me hear your voice;

for your voice is sweet,

and your face is beautiful.’

My beloved is mine and I am his.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah (31:31-34)

See, the days are coming – it is the Lord who speaks – when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive – it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, ‘Learn to know the Lord!’ No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest – it is the Lord who speaks.

The word of the Lord.

**SECOND READING**

Some suggestions for the Second Reading from the New Testament…

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians (12:31-13:8.)

Be ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them. If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing everything, and if I have faith in all its fullness, to move mountains, but

without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever. Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people’s sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes. Love does not come to an end.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans (8:31-35, 37-39)

With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us – he rose from the dead, and there at Gods right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or attacked. These are the trails through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans (12:1-2,9-18)

Think of God’s mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do.

Do not let your love be a pretence, but sincerely prefer good to evil. Love each other as much as brothers should, and have a profound respect for each other. Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with great earnestness of spirit. If you have hope, this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying. If any of the saints are in need you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care.

Bless those who persecute you: never curse them, bless them. Rejoice with those who rejoice and be sad with those in sorrow. Treat everyone with equal kindness; never be condescending but make real friends with the poor. Do not allow yourselves to become self-satisfied. Never repay evil with evil but let everyone see that you are interested only in the highest ideals. Do all you can to live at peace with everyone.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians (5:2,21-33)

Follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up for us as an offering and a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God. Husbands should love their wives, just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy by washing her in cleansing water with a form of words, so that when he took the Church to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church because we are part of his Body. This is why a man leaves his father and mother and becomes attached to his wife, and the two become one flesh. This mystery has great significance, but I am applying it to Christ and the Church. To sum up: you also, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Colossians (3: 12-17.)

You are God’s chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as the quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them. Put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body.

Always be thankful. Let the message of Christ, in all it’s richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the first letter of St John (3: 18-24)

My children,

our love is not to be just words or mere talk,

but something real and active;

only by this can we be certain

that we are children of the truth

and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence,

whatever accusations it may raise against us,

because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything.

My dear people,

if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience,

we need not be afraid in God’s presence,

and whatever we ask him,

we shall receive,

because we keep his commandments

and live the kind of life he wants.

His commandments are these:

that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ

and that we love one another

as he told us to.

Whoever keeps his commandments

lives in God and God lives in him.

We know that he lives in us

by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the first letter of St John (4: 7-12)

My dear people,

Let us love one another

Since love comes from God

And everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.

Anyone who fails to love can never have known God,

Because God is love.

God’s love for us was revealed

When he sent into the world his only Son

So that we could have life through him;

This is the love I mean:

Not our love for God,

But God’s love for us when he sent his Son

To be the sacrifice that takes our sins away.

My dear people,

Since God has loved us so much,

We too should love one another.

No one has ever seen God;

But as long as we love one another

God will live in us

And his love will be complete in us.

The word of the Lord.

**THE GOSPEL**

Some suggestions for The Gospel…

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark (10: 6-9)

Jesus said: “From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (5:1-12)

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up to the hill. There he sat down, and was joined by the disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

How happy are the poor in spirit;

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle:

They shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn:

They shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:

They shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful:

They shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart:

They shall seek God.

Happy the peacemakers:

They shall be called sons of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right:

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (5:13-16)

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lampstand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (7:21,24-29)

Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. ‘Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.

And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell – and great was its fall!’

Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (19:3-6)

Some Pharisees approached Jesus, and to test him they said “Is it against the Law for a man to divorce his wife on any pretext whatever?” Jesus answered: “Have you not read that the creator from the beginning made them male and female and that he said: This is why a man must leave his father and mother, and cling to his wife, and he two become one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (22:35-40)

A lawyer, to disconcert Jesus, put a question, “Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?” Jesus said, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole law, and the prophets also.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (2:1-11)

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” Jesus said, “Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” There were six stone jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water”, and they filled them to the brim. “Draw some out now,” he told them, “and take it to the steward.” They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from – only the stewards who had drawn the water knew – the steward called the bridegroom and said: “People generally serve the best wine first, and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you have kept the best wine till now.” This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (15:9-12)

Jesus said to his disciples;

‘As the Father has loved me,

so I have loved you.

Remain in my love.

If you keep my commandments

You will remain in my love,

Just as I have kept my Father’s commandments

And remain in his love.

I have told you this

So that my own joy may be in you

And your joy be complete

This is my commandment:

Love one another,

As I have loved you’.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (15:12-16).

Jesus said to his disciples,

‘This my commandment:

love one another,

as I have loved you.

No one can have greater love

than to lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends

if you do what I command you.

I shall no longer call you servants,

because a servant does not know

his master’s business;

I call you friends,

because I have made known to you

everything I have learnt from my Father.

You did not choose me,

no, I chose you;

and I commissioned you

to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last;

so that the Father will give you

anything you ask him in my name.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (17:20-26)

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

“Holy Father,

I pray not only for these,

but for those also

who through their words will believe in me.

May they all be one.

Father, may they be one in us,

as you are in me and I am in you,

so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.

I have given them the glory you gave to me,

that they may be one as we are one.

With me in them and you in me,

may they be so completely one

that the world will realise that it was you who sent me

and that I have loved them as much as you loved me.

Father,

I want those you have given me

to be with me where I am,

so that they may always see the glory

you have given me

because you loved me

before the foundation of the world.

Father, Righteous One,

the world has not known you,

but I have known you,

and these have known

that you have sent me.

I have made your name known to them

and will continue to make it known,

so that the love with which you loved me may be in them,

and so that I may be in them.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (17:20-23)

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: ‘I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me. May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the world will realise that it was you who sent me and that I have loved them as much as you loved me.’

The Gospel of the Lord.