
OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

(Both to be read by the first reader. Please pause for about 5 seconds before beginning the Psalm)

774(1) Genesis 1:26-28,31a

A reading from the book of Genesis

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.

774(2) Genesis 2:18-24

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

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.

774(3) Genesis 24:48-51, 58-67

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

The servant of Abraham 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 call 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 Rebekah 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 Rebekah into 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.

774(4) Tobit 7

A Reading from the Book of Tobit

Then Tobias said to Raphael, "Brother Azarias, will you ask Raguel to give me my sister Sarah?" Raguel overheard the words, and said to the young man, "Eat and drink, and make the most of your evening; no one else has the right to take my daughter Sarah – no one but you, my brother. In any case I, for my own part, am not at liberty to give her to anyone else, since you are her next of kin."

Tobias spoke out, "I will not hear of eating and drinking till you have come to a decision about me."

Raguel answered, "Very well. Since, as prescribed by the Book of Moses, she is given to you, heaven itself decrees she shall be yours. I therefore entrust your sister to you. From now you are her brother and she is your sister. She is given to you from today for ever. The Lord of heaven favor you tonight, my child, and grant you his grace and peace."

Raguel called for his daughter Sarah, took her by the hand and gave her to Tobias with these words, "I entrust her to you; the law and the ruling recorded in the Book of Moses assign her to you as your wife. Take her; take her home to your father's house with a good conscience. The God of heaven grant you a good journey in peace."

Then he turned to her mother and asked her to fetch him writing paper. He drew up the marriage contract, how he gave his daughter as bride to Tobias according to the ordinance in the Law of Moses.

After this they began to eat and drink.

The Word of the Lord.

774(5) Tobit 8:5-7A

A reading from the book of Tobit

Tobias 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 a helpmate 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."

The Word of the Lord.

774(6) Song Of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16A; 8:6-7A

A reading from the Song of Songs

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 window, he peers through the lattice.

My Beloved lifts up his voice, he says to me, "Come then, my love, my lovely one, come.

"My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock, in the coverts 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. He said to me:

Set me like a seal on your heart, like a seal on your arm. For love is strong as Death, jealously 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.

774(7) Sirach 26

A reading from the book of Sirach

Happy the husband of a really good wife; the number of his days will be doubled. A perfect wife is the joy of her husband, he will live out the years of his life in peace. A good wife is the best of portions, reserved for those who fear the Lord; rich or poor, they will be glad of heart, cheerful of face, whatever the season.

The grace of a wife will charm her husband, her accomplishments will make him the stronger. A silent wife is a gift from the Lord, no price can be put on a well-trained character.

A modest wife is a boon twice over, a chaste character cannot be weighed on scales. Like the sun rising over the mountains of the Lord is the beauty of a good wife in a well-kept house.

The Word of the Lord.

774(8) Jeremiah 31

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah

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 a covenant 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 neighbor to try to teach neighbor, or brother to say to brother, "Learn to know the Lord!" No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest.

The Word of the Lord.

PSALMS

(Both to be read by the first reader. Please pause for about 5 seconds before beginning the Psalm)

776(1) Psalm 32(33)

The response to the psalm: The Lord fills the earth with his love.

All: *The Lord fills the earth with his love.*

They are happy, whose God is the Lord,
the people he has chosen as his own.
The Lord looks on those who revere him,
on those who hope in his love.

All: *The Lord fills the earth with his love.*

Our soul is waiting for the Lord.
The Lord is our help and our shield.
In him do our hearts find joy.
We trust in his holy name.

All: *The Lord fills the earth with his love.*

May your love be upon us, O Lord,
as we place all our hope in you.

All: *The Lord fills the earth with his love.*

776(2) Psalm 33(34)

The response to the psalm: I will bless the Lord at all times.

All: *I will bless the Lord at all times.*

I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad.

All: *I will bless the Lord at all times.*

Glorify the Lord with me.
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

All: *I will bless the Lord at all times.*

Look toward him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress.

All: I will bless the Lord at all times.

The angel of the Lord is encamped
around those who revere him, to rescue them.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
He is happy who seeks refuge in him.

All: I will bless the Lord at all times.

776(3) Psalm 102(103)

The response to the psalm: The Lord is compassion and love.

All: The Lord is compassion and love.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings.

All: The Lord is compassion and love.

The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
As a father has compassion on his sons,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him.

All: The Lord is compassion and love.

The love of the Lord is everlasting
upon those who hold him in fear;
his justice reaches out to children's children
when they keep his covenant in truth.

All: The Lord is compassion and love.

776(4) Psalm 111(112)

The response to the psalm: Happy the man who takes delight in the Lord's commands.

All: Happy the man who takes delight in the Lord's commands.

Happy the man who fears the Lord,
who takes delight in all his commands.
His sons will be powerful on earth;
the children of the upright are blessed.

All: Happy the man who takes delight in the Lord's commands.

Riches and wealth are in his house;
his justice stands firm for ever.
He is a light in the darkness for the upright
he is generous, merciful and just.

All: Happy the man who takes delight in the Lord's commands.

The good man takes pity and lends,
he conducts his affairs with honor.
The just man will never waver:
he will be remembered for ever.

All: Happy the man who takes delight in the Lord's commands.

He has no fear of evil news;
with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord.
With a steadfast heart he will not fear;
he will see the downfall of his foes.

All: Happy the man who takes delight in the Lord's commands.

Open-handed, he gives to the poor;
his justice stands firm for ever.
His head will be raised in glory.

All: Happy the man who takes delight in the Lord's commands.

776(5) Psalm 127(128)

The response to the psalm: O blessed are those who fear the lord.

All: O blessed are those who fear the lord.

O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!
By the labor of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper.

All: O blessed are those who fear the lord.

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table.

All: O blessed are those who fear the lord.

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
all the days of your life!

All: O blessed are those who fear the lord.

776(6) Psalm 144(145)

The response to the psalm: How good is the Lord to all.

All: *How good is the Lord to all.*

The Lord is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures.

All: *How good is the Lord to all.*

All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord,
and your friends shall repeat their blessing.
The eyes of all creatures look to you
and you give them their food in due time.

All: *How good is the Lord to all.*

The Lord is just in all his ways
and loving in all his deeds.
He is close to all who call him,
who call on him from their hearts.

All: *How good is the Lord to all.*

776(7) Psalm 148

The response to the psalm: Let them praise the name of the Lord.

All: *Let them praise the name of the Lord.*

Praise the Lord from the heavens,
praise him in the heights.
Praise him, all his angels,
praise him, all his host.

All: *Let them praise the name of the Lord.*

Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, shining stars.
Praise him, highest heavens
and the waters above the heavens.

All: *Let them praise the name of the Lord.*

Praise him, all mountains and hills,
all fruit trees and cedars,
beasts, wild and tame,
reptiles and birds on the wing.

All: *Let them praise the name of the Lord.*

All earth's kings and peoples, praise him,
earth's princes and rulers;
young men and maidens,
old men together with children.

All: Let them praise the name of the Lord.

Let them praise the name of the Lord
for he alone is exalted.
The splendor of his name
reaches beyond heaven and earth.

All: Let them praise the name of the Lord.

NEW TESTAMENT READINGS

(To be read by the second reader)

775(1) Romans 8:31-35, 38-39

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

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 God's 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 even attacked. These are the trials 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.

775(2) Romans 12:1-2, 9-18

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

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 behavior of the world around you, but let your behavior 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 pretense, 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 yourself 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.

775(3) 1 Corinthians 6:13-15, 17, 19-20

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians

The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. God, who raised the Lord from the dead, will by his power raise us up too.

You know, surely, that your bodies are members making up the body of Christ?
Anyone who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God.

The Word of the Lord.

775(4) 1 Corinthians 12:31, 13:8

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians

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.

775(5) Ephesians 5:21-33

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians

Follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up in our place.

Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything.

Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her 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 it is his body – and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body.

This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.

To sum up; you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband.

The Word of the Lord.

775(6) Colossians 3:12-17

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians

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 a 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 its 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.

775(7) 1 Peter 3:1-10

A reading from the first letter of Peter

Wives should be obedient to their husbands. Then, if there are some husbands who have not yet obeyed the word, they may find themselves won over, without a word spoken, by the way their wives behave when they see how faithful and conscientious they are.

Do not dress up for show: doing up your hair, wearing gold bracelets and fine clothes; all this should be inside, in a person's heart, imperishable: the ornament of a sweet and gentle disposition – this is what is precious in the sight of God. That was how the holy women of the past dressed themselves attractively – they hoped in God and were tender and obedient to their husbands; like Sarah, who was obedient to Abraham, and called him her lord. You are now her children, as long as you live good lives and do not give way to fear or worry.

In the same way, husbands must always treat their wives with consideration in their life together, respecting a woman as one who, though she may be the weaker partner, is equally an heir to the life of grace. This will stop anything from coming in the way of your prayers.

Finally: you should all agree among yourselves and be sympathetic; love the brothers, have compassion and be self-effacing. Never pay back one wrong with another, or an angry word with another one; instead, pay back with a blessing. That is what you are called to do, so that you inherit a blessing yourself.

The Word of the Lord.

775(8) 1 John 3:18-24

A reading from the first letter of John

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 that 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.

775(9) 1 John 4:7-12

A reading from the first letter of John

My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who love 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 God 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.

775(10) Revelation 19:1-2, 5-9

A reading from the book of Revelation

I, John, seemed to hear the great sound of a huge crowd in heaven, singing, "Alleluia! Victory and glory and power to our God!"

Then a voice came from the throne; it said, "Praise our God, you servants of his and all who, great or small, revere him." And I seemed to hear the voices of a huge crowd, like the sound of the ocean or the great roar of thunder, answering:

"Alleluia! The reign of the Lord our God Almighty has begun; let us be glad and joyful and give praise to God, because this is the time for the marriage of the Lamb. His bride is ready, and she has been able to dress herself in dazzling white linen, because her linen is made of the good deeds of the saints."

The angel said, "Write this: Happy are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb."

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL READINGS

(Read by the Priest or Deacon)

778(1) Matthew 5:1-12

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the Prophets who were before you.”

The gospel of the Lord.

778(2) Matthew 5:13-16

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

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 underfoot 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 lamp-stand 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.

778(3) Matthew 7:21, 24-29

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

Jesus said to his disciples:

“It is not those who say to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven.

“Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock.

“But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!”

Jesus had now finished what he wanted to say, and his teaching made a deep impression on the people because he taught them with authority, and not like their own scribes.

The gospel of the Lord.

778(4) Matthew 19:3-6

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

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?”

He 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 father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body? They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide."

The gospel of the Lord.

778(5) Matthew 22:34-40

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

To disconcert Jesus, a lawyer 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, 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 neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also."

The gospel of the Lord.

778(6) Mark 10:6-9

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark

Jesus said:

"From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide."

The gospel of the Lord.

778(7) John 2:1-11

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to John

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 come yet." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tell you."

There were six stone water 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 had turned into wine.

Having no idea where it came from – only the servants 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.

778(8) John 15:9-12

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to John

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.

778(9) John 15:12-16

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to John

Jesus said to his disciples:

“This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you.
A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.

“You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants any more, 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; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name.”

The gospel of the Lord.

778(10) John 17:1, 20-26

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to John

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and prayed, saying:

“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 realize 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.

MARRIAGE VOWS

The heart of the Rite of Marriage is the exchange of consent between the bride and the groom. In this moment, they, as ministers of the sacrament, express their lifelong commitment to love and honor each other, as the priest (or deacon) acts as a witness. It is often suggested that couples memorize their vows not only to experience the exchange of consent in a more powerful way, by speaking them from the heart, rather than repeating them phrase by phrase after the priest. In this they will also spend time pondering what the vows mean, and hopefully remember the words for years to come, as the words take on more and more meaning in their day-to-day love and care for each other.

My dear friends you have come here together in this church so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love in the presence of the Church’s minister and this community. Christ abundantly blesses this love. (He has already consecrated you in baptism and now he enriches and strengthens you by a special sacrament so that you may assume the duties of marriage in mutual and lasting fidelity). And so, in the presence of the Church, I ask you to state your intentions.

GROOM and **BRIDE** have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage?

Will you love and honor each other as man and wife for the rest of your lives?

Will you accept children lovingly from God, and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?

Since it is your intention to enter into marriage, join your right hands, and declare your consent before God and his Church.

I, **GROOM**, take you **BRIDE** to be my wife. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

I, **BRIDE**, take you **GROOM** to be my husband. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

You have declared your consent before the Church. May the Lord in his goodness strengthen your consent and fill you both with his blessings. What God has joined, no one must divide.