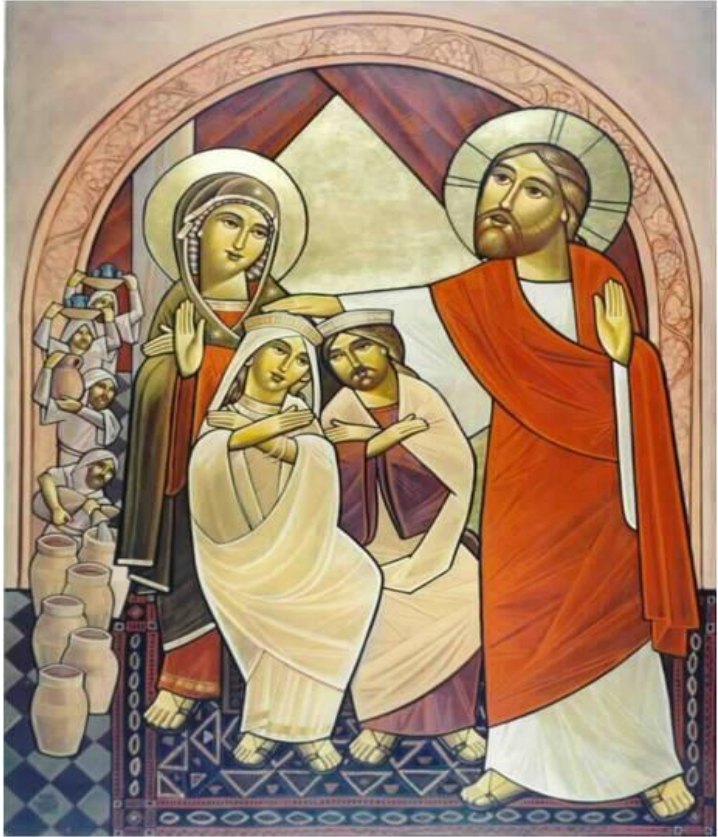




Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate
DIOCESE OF THE MIDLANDS
ST. MARY & ST. MARK COPTIC CENTRE

The Holy Matrimony



_____ and _____

Hill Park House, Lapworth Street, Lapworth, Warwickshire, B94 5QS, UK.

Tel: 01564 783926 Fax: 01564 784236.

Registered Charity No: 515637. Web: www.ukmidcopts.org

BRIDAL PARTY

Groom's Parents:

Bride's Parents:

Best Man:

Matron of Honour:

Usher :

Page Boy:

Flower Girl:

INVOCATION

Priest

In the name of our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the founder of the laws of perfection, we declare at this ceremony the marriage of the blessed Orthodox **son** to the blessed Orthodox **daughter**

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Blessed be God, the Father Almighty, Amen.

Deacon

Amen.

Congregation

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, for Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, forever and ever, Amen.

Priest

In the name of our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the founder of the laws of perfection, we declare at this ceremony the marriage of the blessed Orthodox **daughter** to the blessed Orthodox **son**

Blessed be the Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deacon

Amen.

Congregation

The Lord's Prayer

Priest

In the name of our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the founder of the laws of perfection, we declare at this ceremony the marriage of the blessed Orthodox **son** to the blessed Orthodox **daughter**

Blessed be the Holy Spirit the Comforter, Amen.

Deacon

Amen.

Congregation

The Lord's Prayer

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Congregation

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Priest

Let us pray.

Deacon

Stand up for prayer.

Priest

The priest, bowing towards his fellow priests, faces the west and makes the sign of the Cross over the people. The priest asks the bridal couple for their approval.

Peace be with you all.

Congregation

And also with your spirit.

Priest

Let us give thanks to the gracious and merciful God, the Father of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ, for He has protected, assisted, preserved and accepted us, spared us, had compassion on us, supported us, and brought us till this hour.

Let us also ask Him, the almighty God to keep us in peace this blessed day and all the days of our life.

Deacon

Let us pray.

Congregation

Sung in Coptic "Kyrie Eleison"

Lord, have mercy

Priest

O Lord, Master and Almighty God, the Father of our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we thank Thee on every occasion, in every condition, and for all things. For Thou hast protected, assisted, preserved and accepted us, spared us, supported us and brought us to this hour.

Deacon

Let us pray that God may have mercy and compassion upon us, hear us, sustain us and continually accept the prayers and supplication of His saints on our behalf, and bless and and forgive us our sins.

Congregation

Sung in Coptic "Kyrie Eleison"

Lord, have mercy

Priest

Therefore we ask and appeal to Thy goodness, O Lover of mankind that Thee grant us to complete this blessed day and all the days of our life in peace and in Thy fear.

All envy, all temptation, all works of Satan, all intrigues of the wicked people, the

rising up of enemies, seen and unseen

Do cast away from us,

And from all Thy people,

And from this Church,

And from the bride and groom,

And from this Holy place of Thine.

Grant us endowments and benefactions, as Thou hast given us the authority to tread upon the serpents and the scorpions and upon the power of the enemy.

Congregation

This is the censer of pure gold, holding sweet aroma, in the hands of Aaron the Priest, offering up incense upon the altar.

We worship Thee O Christ with Thy Gracious Father and the Holy Spirit, for Thou hast come and saved us.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your saintly spirit, my Lord, the honoured father, the high Priest. May the clergy and all the people be safe in the Lord. Amen, so be it.

Priest

O Master, Lord Jesus Christ, Our God, Who adorned the sky with the stars and beautified the earth with the magnificence of many different kinds of fruitful plants, and Who granted humanity, heavenly and divine things. Now also, O Righteous One, Lover of mankind, we ask Thee to bless these vestments, so that they may become for Thy two servants who are wearing them, through Thy goodness, vestments of glory and salvation, vestments of joy and happiness. Keep them both, pure in soul, body, and spirit, that their life may be healthy, peaceful, and chaste through acts of righteousness. Grant them both heavenly and earthly comfort that they become rich through charitable deeds; fill their houses and storage places with all blessings, and may they become worthy of doing Thy will at all times, for Thee are merciful and righteous. Glory be to Thee, With Thy Good Father and the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life, now and forever. Amen.

Deacon

O bridegroom, don the spiritual raiment that wraps Michael and the girdle of pearls.

Congregation

Sung in Coptic "Kyrie Eleison"

Lord, have mercy (thrice)

PAULINE EPISTLE (Ephesians 5:22-6:3)

Deacon

The Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians, May his blessings be with us all, Amen.

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so [let] the wives [be] to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord [does] the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery that I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife [see] that she respects [her] husband. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

INTRODUCTION TO TRISAGION

Congregation

The Holy Spirit, The Paraclete, that came down on the apostles at Pentecost, Who inspired them to speak in many tongues.

When the fifty days were over, the twelve apostles were gathered together.

And the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete descended from heaven, and spread over each one, and they spoke in many tongues.

TRISAGION

Congregation

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, Who was born of the Virgin, have mercy upon us.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, Who was crucified for our sake, have mercy upon us.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, Who rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, have mercy upon us.

Glory be the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Now, and forevermore, Amen. O Holy Trinity, have mercy upon us.

GOSPEL LITANY FOR MARRIAGE

Priest

Let us pray.

Deacon

Stand up for the prayer.

Priest

Peace be with you all.

Congregation

And also with you.

Priest

O Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, who said to His saintly disciples and honoured Apostles, “Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see things which you see and have not seen them and to hear things which you hear and have not heard them. May we be worthy to hear and to act according to Thy Holy Gospel through the prayers of Thy Saints.

Deacon

Pray for the hearing of the Holy Gospel.

Congregation

Sung in Coptic “Kyrie Eleison”

Lord, have mercy

Priest

Remember, O Lord those who have asked us to remember them in our supplications and prayers which we offer up unto Thee, O Lord our God. Grant repose to these souls who have preceded us in departure; and heal those who are sick. For Thee are our life, our salvation, our hope, our healing and our resurrection.

Deacon

Stand up in the fear of God, and listen to the Holy Gospel.

A chapter from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the evangelist, Apostle and the pure disciple, may his blessings be with us all.

From the Psalms of our teacher David the king and the prophet, may his blessings be with us all. Amen.

Psalm 19: 5-6

“Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices as a strong man to run a race. Thy wife shall be a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: your children like olive plants round your table.” Alleluia.

Let them exalt him in the assembly of his people, and praise him in the council of the elders, for he makes his family like a flock. The upright see and rejoice, the Lord has sworn and will not relent that you are the Priest forever in the order of Melchisadek, the Lord is at your right hand, oh saintly father - Pope Abba **Shenouda the third**, and your brother in the apostolic ministry, our honourable bishop Abba **Meissael** May the Lord keep your lives for us.

Congregation

Amen Alleluia

Deacon

Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord. Our Lord, God and Saviour, the King of us all, Jesus Christ the Son of the Living God, Glory be to Thee forevermore. Amen.

Matthew 19: 1-6

“Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, [that] He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there. The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for [just] any reason?” And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made [them] at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ said, ‘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 then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

Congregation

For blessed is The Father, The Son, and Holy Spirit, The perfect Trinity. We worship and glorify you.

WEDDING PRAYERS

Priest

O Lord God Almighty, Who is in heaven, the Lord of our forefathers; we beseech Thee to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord we have mercy. (Kyrie Eleison)

O God who created the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is therein, and ornamented them with Thy wisdom. We ask Thee, O Lord, to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who made man in His image, after His likeness, and put him in the Paradise of joy, we ask you O Lord to hear us and to have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who created woman from Adam's rib and granted that she should be his helpmate & equal; we beseech Thee to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who blessed Abraham and Sarah and made her his wife and granted him the honour of being Head of all Patriarchs; we beseech Thee to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who preserved Isaac and granted for him Rebecca and saved him from his enemies, we ask Thee O Lord to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who blessed Jacob and gave him Rachel as a wife and made them both heirs of the promise; we beseech Thee to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who raised Joseph up as a leader and granted him Asenath to be his wife and through him Thee provided for the whole land of Egypt; we beseech Thee O Lord to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who was pleased to be born of a virgin in the fullness of time and enlightened mankind; we beseech Thee to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who attended the wedding of Cana of Galilee; bless this marriage as you blessed that marriage. We beseech Thee O Lord to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God by Thy divine power, Thee transformed the water into true wine, bless Thy two servants and always, and purify them with Thy love for mankind. We ask Thee O Lord to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who attended the wedding of Cana of Galilee, and blessed that wedding, and transformed the water to wine by Thy divine power, bless and protect this wedding of Thy servants **(Groom)..... and (Bride).....** and keep them in peace, harmony and love and protection. We ask Thee O Lord to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

O God who is beneficent, compassionate and full of goodness and affection, O God make us glorify your goodness. O lover of mankind we ask you O Lord to hear us and have mercy on us. Lord have mercy.

Congregation

O Christ the Word of the Father, the Only Begotten Son, grant us your peace, filled with joy.

For blessed is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the perfect Trinity. We worship and glorify Thee.

The three Great Litanies are prayed, (Peace, Fathers and Congregation)

Deacon

In the wisdom of God, let us attend. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. In truth.

Congregation

The Creed:

Truly we believe in one God, the almighty God the Father, maker of heaven and earth, of all things, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of the Father before all ages; Light of light; true God out of true God, begotten not made; consubstantial with the Father, through Whom all things came into being.

He descended from heaven for us and for our salvation, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man. He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, arose from the dead on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended to the heavens and sat down at the right hand of the Father, He shall also come back in His glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there will not be an end.

Truly we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Life-giving Lord, Who proceeds from the Father, we worship and glorify Him together with the Father and the Son, who spoke in the prophets.

And in one, holy, universal and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.

And we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

FIRST MATRIMONIAL PRAYER

Priest

O eternal and everlasting Lord, who has no beginning, whose wisdom has no limit and whose power has no end, who created man from the earth, and gave him a woman out of his side to be his helpmate & equal, as it pleases Thy Lordship and goodness, because “it is not good for a man to be alone”. We ask Thee now our King to join Thy two servants **(Bride) and (Groom).....** so that they may be united and enter into the law of happiness and abide in your truthful teachings. Grant them a living fruit out of the womb so that they rejoice in the birth of their children and have a peaceful life.

Prepare them for every good work through Christ Jesus our Lord. Through Whom the glory, the honour, and the worship are due unto Thee, with Him and the Holy Spirit, now and at all times and unto the ages of all ages. Amen.

Deacons

As Thee granted peace to Thy saintly disciples, tell us as Thee told them, “My peace I give to you.” The gate of the east is Mary the Virgin, the chaste bridal chamber for the pure bridegroom.

Congregation

Sung in Coptic “Kyrie Eleison”

Lord, have mercy (thrice)

SECOND MATRIMONIAL PRAYER

Priest

O Father our God who formed all nature, who formed man from earth and made for him a helpmate from the rib; Thou hast taken from him and joined them together in marriage for life and for the continuous growth of mankind, and told them to grow and multiply and fill the earth and rule it. We ask Thee, O lover of mankind, bless the union of Thy servants **(Groom)..... and (Bride).....** that were united together according to Thy will. Bless them as Thee blessed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Elevate them as Thee did Isaac and Rebecca, and multiply them as Thee multiplied Jacob and his offspring. Glorify them as Thou hast glorified Joseph in Egypt. Grant them purity. Multiply them as Alkana and Anna, whom Thee blessed and gave Samuel, the faithful prophet. Make them worthy of the good tidings of the pure Archangel like Zacharias and Elizabeth, whom Thee gave John the Baptist, the greatest among the offspring of women, that became a forerunner before Thy Only Begotten Son.

Thee also, O Master Lord, blessed Joakim and Anna and made from them the metaphysical ark, the Mother of God, Saint Mary, of whom Thy Only Begotten Son was incarnate and came into the world, and blessed the wedding of Cana of Galilee; bless Thy servants **(Bride) and (Groom).....** who are united at

this hour. Grant them prosperity, wisdom, and salvation's blessings, so that they may be in all goodness and purity united in their bodies and souls and be worthy of Thy blessing and glorify Thy Holy Name together with Thy Only Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit now and forever, Amen.

Deacon

My peace that I have received from My Father, I leave unto you, now and forever.

For blessed is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the perfect Trinity. We worship and glorify Him.

Congregation

Sung in Coptic "Kyrie Eleison"

Lord, have mercy (thrice)

THIRD MATRIMONIAL PRAYER

Priest

O Lord, our great and eternal God, that made life out of the void and created the universe by Thy Logos, and formed man with Thy immaculate Hands, in Thy image and according to Thy likeness, and from one created the other, for Thee said that "it is not good that man should be alone", so Thee caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam and took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh thereof. Because of this a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one body, and what God has joined together let no man put asunder. O Thee who blessed Abraham with Sarah, Isaac with Rebecca, and Jacob with Leah and Rachel, and purified all who were joined in blessing, now O Master Lord look upon Thy servant **(Groom)..... and (Bride).....** his helpmate. Confirm their union, guard their bed in purity. Shield them and their home with Thy unconquerable Right Hand. Save them from all envy and intrigues. Preserve them in harmony to reveal unto Thee O Living God the fruit of life from the womb. Bless them, O God, as Thee blessed Abraham with Sarah, and Isaac with Rebecca, and Jacob with Leah and Rachel. As for the men and women who are here with us, bless them in the name of our Lord, our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, for

Glory is Thy due with Him and the Holy Spirit now and forever and unto the ages of all ages. Amen.

Deacon

Do not forget Thy covenant that Thou hast established with our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, your saints.

O Angel of this day, who are flying up to heaven with this song of praise, remember us before the Lord that He may forgive us our sins.

Congregation

Sung in Coptic "Kyrie Eleison"

Lord, have mercy (thrice)

A PRAYER OF SUBMISSION

Priest

O God, listen to us, unworthy sinners, and establish the union of Thy servants **(Bride)..... and (Groom)** Save them from all evil, and lengthen their lives in meekness, calmness, endurance and obedience, and keep them blameless. Enlighten their hearts and minds so that they may always do Thy will, because Thee are all-merciful to all who cry out to Thee, and we offer up Thy glory, honour and worship with Thy Good Father and The Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Congregation

May God bless us; we shall give praise to His Holy Name at all times; His song of praise is always on our lips.

For blessed is The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, The perfect Trinity. We worship and glorify Thee.

Congregation

Sung in Coptic "Kyrie Eleison"

Lord, have mercy (thrice)

PRAYER OF THE OIL

Priest

O Lord, God almighty, The Father of our Lord, God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who anointed, out of the fruit of the rich olive tree, priests, kings, and prophets. We pray and entreat Thee, O Good Lord, Lover of Mankind, to bless this oil so that it becomes oil to sanctify Thy servants. **(Groom)..... and (Bride).....**
Amen.

Congregation

The weapon of righteousness and justice, Amen.

The anointment of purity and incorruption, Amen.

Light and unfading beauty, Amen.

Joy, ornament and true comfort, Amen.

Power, salvation and victory over all the deeds of the adversary, Amen.

Renewal and salvation for their souls, their bodies and their spirits, Amen.

Wealth with the fruit of good deeds, Amen.

Glory and honour to Thy Holy Name with Thy Only Begotten Son and The Holy Spirit, the life-giver, who is consubstantial with Thee now and forever and ever, Amen.

While the Priest anoints the bridegroom, the Deacons sing:

Deacons

May this oil destroy demons; this oil is against evil spirits; this is the oil of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ the King of Glory.

For blessed is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the perfect Trinity. We worship and glorify Him.

Deacons

The Priest anoints the bride with the Oil, while the deacons chant:

Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and Thy cup made me drunk as if with pure wine; Thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life.

For blessed is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the perfect Trinity. We worship and glorify Him.

Priest

O God, the Lord of hosts, whose mercies are countless, whose goodness is beyond comprehension, we ask Thee to accept our supplications. Guard Thy servants **(Bride) and (Groom).....** Protect their bed in purity. Fortify them by Thy pure angels, and send upon us from Thy ever ready abode a multitude of Thy compassions. Disperse our many faults by Thy goodness, and grant us to be in the places of the rest of your saints in the Heavenly Kingdom, through Thy only Begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is glorified.

PRAYER FOR THE CROWNS

Priest

The Priest places the crowns and prays. Each time, the Congregation responds "Amen".

O Holy God, who crowned the saints with unfading crowns and reconciled and united heavenly and earthly beings; O Master, bless now these crowns which we are going to set upon Thy servants' heads. Make these crowns for them:

Crowns of glory and honour, Amen.

AMEN

Crowns of blessing and salvation, Amen.

AMEN

Crowns of joy and happiness, Amen.

AMEN

Crowns of jubilation and delight, Amen.

AMEN

Crowns of comfort and strength, Amen.

AMEN

Grant Thy servants, who are wearing them, the protection of the Angel of safety and the bond of love. Guard them against all evil thoughts and desires; let your mercy be upon them. Provide them with everything they need without delay throughout their life. Give them joy through their sons and daughters. Make their children good and true members of Thy one Universal Orthodox Church. Guide their way in righteousness through the good will of Thy Good Father and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Congregation

Place the crowns O Priest of Emmanuel,

Place the crowns O Shepherd of Israel,

Place the crowns in glory and joy,

Crown **(Groom)** the bridegroom to **(Bride)** the bride.

Kyrie Eleison (thrice)

Priest

The priest places the crowns and prays. Each time, the congregation responds "Amen".

O Lord, crown Thy servants with Crowns of unvanquished grace, Amen.

AMEN

Crowns of elevated and everlasting glory, Amen.

AMEN

Crowns of unopposed good faith, Amen.

AMEN

And bless all their deeds, Amen.

AMEN

Because, Christ our God, Thee are the giver of all things, Glory be to Thee with the Father and the Holy Spirit; now and forever, Amen.

The priest places the vestments on the groom and bride and makes the sign of the cross over them:

Crown them with glory and honour, O Father, Amen.

AMEN

Bless them, O Only-Begotten Son, Amen.

AMEN

Sanctify them, O Holy Spirit, Amen.

AMEN.

BLESSING OF BRIDE AND GROOM

Congregation

In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and the perfect Trinity.

Worthy, worthy, worthy is St. Mary the Virgin.

Worthy, worthy, worthy O groom and your helper.

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy

Priest

May the peace of our Lord, God, and Saviour, Jesus Christ, which He has given to His pure disciples in the Upper Room of Zion, be with you both, may it always stay with you and dwell in your house. May the Lord grant you a long and prosperous life together, for this great joy that He has sanctioned for you. And may God protect you, my brother, with His mighty arm and establish the Orthodox faith in you. Through His great power and benevolence may He bring

all your efforts to a good and successful end. Know that God Almighty, after creating everything, looked at His creation and saw that it was good. Then He said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." God, blessed be His name, has no parallel or counterpart, but what He said meant that man has three attributes: reason, speech, and spirit. So, God created Adam and made him priest, prophet, and king. He said in the Torah, through Moses, after creating Adam: "It is not good that [Adam] should be alone: I will make him a helpmate:" For God so loved and cared for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And He made the rib a woman and called her Eve. When Adam woke up and looked at the woman, he liked her and he said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Woman was created from man's rib so that she may belong to him and be submissive to him while he, too, may be gentle and kind to her and not neglect her. She may not deem herself above him, but should be obedient to him. They should both be in harmony through good reasoning and love. Neither of them should make decisions separately without consulting with the other. In this way their offspring may be blessed. God has sanctioned marriage in both the Old and New Testament. He further confirmed that in the Holy gospels by saying: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." He also said in the Holy gospels: "What God has joined together let no man put asunder".

David the prophet in the psalms said "Blessed is the man who fears God, for his wife will be a fruitful vine in the very heart of his house and his children like olive branches between his arms and on his table". This is the person who God blesses and sees the gifts all the days of his life. Paul the Apostle said "Woman, submit to your husband as your submission to God".

Now since you have been present at this blessed time before the sanctuary of the Lord of Hosts and His Holy Altar and in the midst of this Congregation, you have been joined together and united in the blessing of matrimony. We remind both of you that our forefathers, who were believers in Christ and were married, were joined in blessed matrimony following the rule of monogamy. They sought to marry for protection and to fulfill the divine command. So you too, follow in the steps of our forefathers and submit yourselves to one another in love and purity.

Congregation

Take unto you, O bridegroom, Thy bride. Jesus Christ has given her to you, and at the hand of the Priest he has given her to you, and blessed you both with His Holy Name.

Kyrie Eleison (thrice)

Priest

It is your duty my blessed son Peter, who is supported by the Holy Spirit to receive your wife, in purity of heart and in sincerity. Do your utmost to do what is good for her. Have compassion on her and always hasten to do that which will gladden her heart for you are today responsible for her as her parents were in love and in humility. Thou hast both been crowned with heavenly crowns and confirmed by the grace of God. Remember that when you fulfill the divine commandments, the Lord will bless you in all you do, he will hold your hand and grant you prosperity and will grant you blessed children and a long peaceful life; He will bless Thee in this and the hereafter.

Congregation

Listen O bride and lend your ear, forsake your people and your father's house, for your beauty has appealed to the bridegroom, and submit for he is your husband.

Kyrie Eleison (thrice)

Priest

And you, blessed daughter, and happy bride, you have heard what was commanded of your husband. So you must honour and respect him, do not disagree with him but increase your obedience to him over what was commanded many times. For you are now alone with him and he is responsible for you instead of your parents. So you must receive him with joy and cheer, do not frown in his face, observe all your obligations to him, and fear God in all you do. Because God the most high instructed you to submit to him and commanded you to obey him as you obey your parents. So obey him as our mother Sarah was obedient to our father Abraham, and used to address him "my Lord." Thus God looked upon her

obedience to him, blessed her, gave her Isaac in her old age, and made her offspring as the stars of heaven and the sand on the seashore. So if you observe what we instructed you to do, and follow all commandments, the Lord will support you and provide for your livelihood, the blessings will descend upon your house, and He will grant you blessed children who will fill your heart with joy.

Congregation

A pure marriage and a revered crown, bless it, Our God Emmanuel, as Thee blessed the wedding of Cana of Galilee, for **the bridegroom and the bride.**

Kyrie Eleison (thrice)

The bride and groom are led by the celebrant to the Royal Doors where they kneel at the entrance of the sanctuary, before the altar, facing Eastward.

Priest

May God bless both of you as He blessed Noah and his wife when they came out of the ark and filled the earth with their offspring. May He bless you as He blessed Abraham with Sarah, and Isaac with Rebecca, and Jacob with Leah and Rachel. May the blessing of the Lord, glory to His name, which overshadowed the wedding of Cana of Galilee overshadow you and your house and transform things that create division into means of blessing, and fill your hearts with spiritual love. May He continue His support to you and grant you long happy lives with blessed children.

May He accept our prayers for this blessed ceremony, reward us and grant them the incorruptible in place of the corruptible, the heavenly for the earthly, and forgive us our sins and save us from the ways of the devil. May He also bless all those who attended, with His right hand of power all the days of your lives, and grant them heavenly joy free from strife. Through the intercession of our Holy Mother the blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of Salvation whom is preferred over all mankind, and the honoured martyr Saint Mark the Evangelist and all the martyrs and holy saints. Amen.

Through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Bow your heads before the Lord.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Priest

O Master, Lord, Jesus Christ the Only-Begotten Son of the Father, who broke all the chains of your sins by His life-giving and redeeming sufferings, who breathed into the face of His holy disciples and His pure apostles saying unto them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit, whose sins you remit they are remitted unto them, and whose sins you retain, they are retained.' Now, also, O Lord, through Thy Holy Apostles, Thou hast given grace unto them who work as Priests, at all times in Thy Holy Church to forgive the sins upon earth, to bind and loosen all the chains of injustice. Now also, we ask of Thy goodness, O Lover-of-man for your servants, my fathers, my brothers and my humble self, those who are bowing down their heads before our sacred glory, Grant us Thy mercy, and break all the chains of our sins. And if we have sinned against Thee knowingly, through anxiety of heart, or in deed, or in word, or in pettiness of heart. O Lord, Thee who knows man's frailty, as good Lover-of-man, grant us the forgiveness of our sins. Bless us, make us pure: absolve us and all your people.

Fill us with Thy fear, guide us to do Thy good and Holy will. For Thee are our God, and unto Thee is due all glory, honour, majesty and worship, with Thy Good Father and the Holy Spirit, Life-giving and consubstantial with Thee. Now, and at all times and unto the ages of all ages. Amen.

CONCLUDING HYMN

Congregation

Amen, Alleluia, glory be to the Father, to the Son and the Holy Spirit. Now and forever and unto the ages of ages, Amen. We cry out and say: O our Lord Jesus Christ, bless the waters of the rivers, May Thy mercy and Thy peace be a fortress

to Thy people. Save us and have mercy upon us.

May you be bestowed the grace of Moses, the Priesthood of Melchizedek, the old age of Jacob, and the long life of Metoshaleh, the chosen intelligence of David, the wisdom of Solomon, and the Comforter Spirit that came upon the Apostles. O Lord preserve the life and the reign of our honourable father, the Archbishop and Pope Abba Shenouda, May the Lord of Heaven firm keep his throne for many years and for a peaceful duration. Subdue all his enemies promptly under his feet quickly. Pray to Lord Christ for us that He may forgive us our sins in peace according to His great mercy.

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord bless us, Amen. Bless me. Behold the penance.

Priest

Christ our Lord

Congregation

Amen. Let it be.

Hail to Mary the queen, the young vine that no farmer has ploughed, on which was found the fruit of life.

The Son of God truly incarnate from the Virgin who gave birth to Him. He saved us and forgave us our sins.

Thee found a blessing, O bride. Many have honoured you because the Word of God was incarnate from you.

Which woman on earth has become the Mother of God except you. As an earthly creation, you became the mother of the Creator. Many woman are honoured, and have gained eternal life. But none are honoured like you, O first among women.

Thee are the high tower in which they found our gem Emmanuel, who dwelt in your womb.

We honour the virginity of the bride who is without evil, the pure, the sacred, the mother of God Mary.

Thee rose higher than the heavens, and you are more honoured than all the earth and all the creatures on it because you became the mother of the Creator.

Thee are truly the sacred place of Jesus the groom as the prophecies say.

Pray for us, our Lady Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ that He may forgive us our sins.