

Celebrating Matrimony: Choice of Day and Mass Texts

A couple may get married on most days of the Liturgical Year, using the texts from Ritual Mass V: “For the Celebration of Marriage.” On our most solemn liturgical days, when the Sacrament of Matrimony is celebrated within Mass, there are restrictions on the choice of texts. On those days, the Mass of the Day is used with its own readings. Also included are the Nuptial Blessing and, if appropriate, the formula for the final blessing (*Order for Celebrating Matrimony* no. 34).

These solemn days are ranked as “1 through 4” in the “Table of Liturgical Days According to Their Order of Precedence” (Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar, 59). They are:

1. Easter Triduum of the Lord’s Passion and Resurrection
2. Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, and Pentecost
Sundays of Advent, Lent, and the Easter Season
Ash Wednesday
Weekdays of Holy Week (Monday to Thursday, inclusive)
Days within the Octave of Easter
3. Solemnities of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Saints listed in the General Calendar
The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls)
4. The solemnity of the principal Patron of the place
The solemnity of the dedication of one’s own church
The solemnity of the title of a one’s own church [e.g., Oct. 1 at St. Thérèse Church]
The solemnity of the title, founder, or patron of a religious order

Number 56 in the Liturgy of the Word rubrics for the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* stipulates that no substitute readings are possible for Matrimony within Mass on any of the occasions listed above in nos. 1-4 of the Table of Liturgical Days. All the readings of the day must be used.

Please note that “the celebration of Marriage on Friday of the Passion of the Lord and Holy Saturday is to be avoided altogether” (OCM 32).

If the Marriage is celebrated on a day having a penitential character, especially during Lent, the couple should be guided on how to take into account the special nature of that day.

However, marriages which are celebrated outside of Mass (Rite II and Rite III) have fewer restrictions. While the Sacred Triduum still is to be avoided, the couple may get married on most days of the liturgical year. The choice of readings may be drawn from the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (see OCM, Chapter IV or Lectionary for Mass, 801-805).

A Chronological List of the Days on which a Ritual Mass may not be used

First Sunday of Advent
Second Sunday of Advent
Immaculate Conception of the BVM (December 8)
Third Sunday of Advent
Fourth Sunday of Advent
The Nativity of the Lord /Christmas (December 25)
Mary, the Holy Mother of God (January 1)
Epiphany of the Lord
Ash Wednesday
First Sunday of Lent
Second Sunday of Lent
Third Sunday of Lent
Fourth Sunday of Lent
Fifth Sunday of Lent
St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary (March 19)
Annunciation of the Lord (March 25)
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
Monday of Holy Week
Tuesday of Holy Week
Wednesday of Holy Week
Thursday of Holy Week (day)
Holy Thursday
Friday of the Passion of the Lord/ Good Friday
Holy Saturday/ Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday: Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord
Monday within the Octave of Easter
Tuesday within the Octave of Easter
Wednesday within the Octave of Easter
Thursday within the Octave of Easter
Friday within the Octave of Easter
Saturday within the Octave of Easter
Second Sunday of Easter/ Sunday of Divine Mercy
Third Sunday of Easter
Fourth Sunday of Easter
Fifth Sunday of Easter
Sixth Sunday of Easter
Ascension of the Lord
Seventh Sunday of Easter
Pentecost Sunday
The Most Holy Trinity
The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
Nativity of John the Baptist (June 24)
Saints Peter and Paul (June 29)
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15)
All Saints (November 1)
All Souls (November 2)
Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

(This order will be impacted by the date of Easter in any given year.)