

SUGGESTED READINGS FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

First Reading and a possible second reading (or these can be used as first reading) and Gospels

A Reading from the book of Genesis 1 :26-28.31

Male and female he created them

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, indeed it was very good.

The Word of the Lord.

A Reading from the book of Genesis 2: 18-24

They become one body

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 Tobit 8: 4-8

Bring us to old age together

On the evening of their marriage, Tobias said to Sarah. 'You and I must pray and petition our Lord to win his grace and protection. '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.'

And together they said, 'Amen, Amen'.

The Word of the Lord.

A Reading from the Song of Songs 2: 8-10. 14. 15; 8: 6-7

Love is strong as Death

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
Beloved lifts up his voice,

says to me,
'Come then, my love,
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.

Set me like a seal on your heart,
like 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 book of Ecclesiasticus 26: I A. 13-16

Like the sun rising is the beauty of a good wife in a well-kept house

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 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,
the beauty of a good wife in a well-kept house.

The Word of the Lord.

A Reading from the prophet Jeremiah 31 : 31-34

I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the House of Judah

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 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 (or alternatively First Reading)

A Reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans 8: 31-35. 37-39

Nothing can come between us and the love of Christ?

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.

A Reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans 12:1-2.9-13

Offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God

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 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 anyone is in need you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care.

The Word of the Lord

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

If I am without love, it will do me no good whatever

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 Ephesians 5: 2. 25-32

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

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

The Word of the Lord.

A Reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Colossians 3.12-17

Over all these, to keep them together and complete them, put on love

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.

A Reading from the first letter of St. John 3:18-24

Our love is to be something real and active

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.

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 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.

GOSPEL (with Gospel Acclamation)

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
God is love;
let us love one another
as God has loved us.
Alleluia!

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 5: 1-12

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

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his 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 see 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

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
As long as we love one another
God will live in us,
and his love will be complete in us.
Alleluia!

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:13-16

You are the light of the world

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 hilltop 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.

Gospel Acclamation 1 Jn 4: 16

Alleluia, alleluia!
Anyone who lives in love
lives in God,
and God lives in him.
Alleluia!

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 7: 21. 24-29

He built his house on rock

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.

Gospel Acclamation 1 Jn 4:7

Alleluia, alleluia!
Everyone who loves
is begotten by God,
and knows God.
Alleluia!

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 19: 3-6

What God has united, man must not divide

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

Gospel Acclamation 1 Jn 4: 8. 11

Alleluia, alleluia!
God is love; let us love one another
as God has loved us.
Alleluia!

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 22: 35-40

This is the greatest and the first commandment

The second resembles it. 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, 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.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
Everyone who loves
is begotten by God,
and knows God.
Alleluia!

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 10: 6-9

They are no longer two, but one body

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.

Gospel Acclamation 1 Jn 4:12

Alleluia, alleluia!
As long as we love one another
God will live in us,
and his love will be complete in us.
Alleluia!

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to John 2: 1-11

This was the first of the signs given by Jesus -at Cana in Galilee

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 tells 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.

Gospel Acclamation 1 Jn 4:16

Alleluia, alleluia!
Anyone who lives in love
lives in God,
and God lives in him.
Alleluia!

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to John 15: 9

Remain in my love

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 loved you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation 1 Jn 4: 8.11

Alleluia, alleluia!
God is love;
let us love one another
as God has loved us.
Alleluia!

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.