



CEREMONY OF THE ROSES

Customized for

Mary Doe and John Smith



Processional

Minister and Groom

Seat Grandparents

Seat Parents

Mothers light side Unity candles.

Wedding Party enters

Minister: *Who presents this woman?*

Minister: *John Smith and Mary Doe have not come here on this day to make a solemn promise or to exchange a sacred vow. They have already done that, long ago in their hearts. John and Mary have come here to make public their commitment; to give notice to their promise; to say again their vow, out loud and in your presence, out of their desire that we will all come to feel a very real and intimate part of their decision and thus make it even more powerful.*

They have also come here in the further hope that their ritual of bonding will help bring us all closer together. If you are here with a spouse or a partner, let this ceremony be a reminder, a rededication of your own loving bond.

We begin by asking the question: Why get married? John and Mary have answered this question for themselves. Now I want to ask them so that they can be sure of their answer, certain of their understanding and firm in their commitment to the truth they share.

Ceremony of the Roses

Bride hands bouquet to Maid of Honor.

Bride and Groom face each other and hold hands

Minister gets two red roses and hands them to **the couple**.



*This is the Ceremony of the Roses in which **John and Mary** share their understandings and commemorate that sharing.*

*Now **John and Mary**, it is your firm understanding that you are not entering into this marriage for reasons of security –*

... that the only real security is not in owning or possessing, nor in being owned or possessed...

...not in demanding or expecting and not even in hoping, that what you think you need in life will be supplied by the other...

...but rather, in knowing that everything you need in life -- all the love, all the wisdom, all the insight, all the power, all the knowledge, all the understanding, all the nurturing, all the compassion, and all the strength – reside within you...

...and that you are not each marrying the other in hopes of getting these gifts, but in hopes of giving these gifts, that the other might have them in even greater abundance.

Is that your Firm understanding now?

Bride and Groom say: “It is.”



John and Mary, it is your firm understanding you are not entering into this marriage as a means of in any way limiting, controlling, hindering, or restricting each other from any true expression and honest celebration of that which is the highest and best within you – including your love of God, your love of life, your love of people, your love of creativity, your love of work, or any aspect of your being which genuinely represents you, and brings you joy.

Is that still your firm understanding now?

Bride and Groom say: “It is.”

Finally, **John and Mary**, you do not see marriage as producing obligations, but rather as providing opportunities...

...opportunities for growth, for full Self-expression, for lifting your lives to their highest potential, for healing every false thought or small idea you ever had about yourself, and for ultimate reunion with God through the communion of your two souls...

... that this is truly a Holy communion ... a journey through life with one you love as an equal partner, sharing equally both the authority and the responsibilities inherent in any partnership, bearing equally what burdens there be, basking equally in the glories.

Is that the vision you wish to enter into now?

Bride and Groom say: “It is.”

Let these red roses, symbolize your individual understandings of these Earthly things; that you both know and agree how life will be with you in bodily form, and within the physical structure called marriage. Give these roses now to each other as a symbol of your sharing of these agreements and understanding with love.

Roses are given to attendants.

Blessing the Rings

Minster gets two white roses with the rings.

Bride takes the rose has her ring on it.

Groom takes the rose has his ring on it.



Now take this white rose. It is a symbol of your larger understandings of your spiritual nature and your spiritual truth. It stands for the purity of your Real and Highest Self, and of the purity of God's Love, which shines upon you now and always.

What symbols do you bring as a reminder of the promises to be given and received today?

Bride and Groom remove rings from the stems. **Roses are given to attendants. Bride and Groom** give the rings to the **Minister** who holds them in his hand as he says...

*These rings are a circle, the symbol of the sun and the earth and the universe. They are a symbol of holiness and of perfection and peace. They are also the symbol of the eternality of spiritual truth, love and life ... that which has no beginning and no end. And in this moment, **John and Mary** choose for them to be a symbol of unity, but not of possession; of joining, but not of restriction; of encirclement, but not of entrapment. For Love cannot be possessed, nor can it be restricted. And the soul can never be entrapped.*

*Now **John and Mary**, please take these rings you wish to give, one to the other. (**Bride** takes her ring – **Groom** takes his ring.)*



Exchange of Vows

Minister: Now **John**, please repeat after me.

Groom: I, **John Smith** ... ask you, **Mary Doe** ... to be my partner, my lover ... my friend, and my wife ... I announce and declare ... my intention ... to give you ... my deepest friendship and love ... not only ... when your moments are high ... but when they are low ... not only ... when you remember clearly ... Who you are ... but when you forget ... not only ... when you are acting with love ... but when you are not ... I further announce ... before God and these here present ... that I will seek always ... to see the Light of Divinity ... within you ... and seek always ... to share the Light of Divinity... within me ... even, and especially ... in whatever moments of darkness may come.

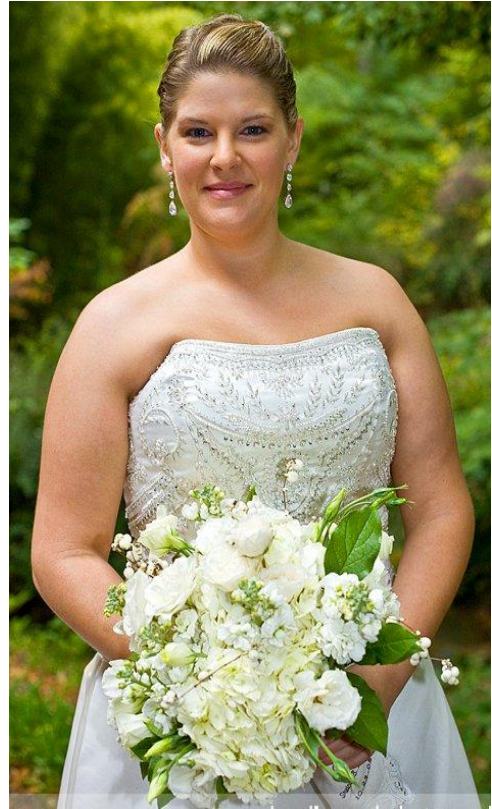
It is my intention ... to be with you forever ... in a Holy Partnership of the soul ... that we may do God's work together ... sharing all that is good within us ... with all those ... whose lives we touch.

Minister to the Bride: **Mary**, do you choose to grant **John's** request that you be his wife?

Bride: I do.

Minister: Now **Mary**, please repeat after me.

Bride: I, **Mary Doe** ... ask you, **John Smith** ... to be my partner, my lover ... my friend, and my husband ... I announce and declare ... my intention ... to give you ... my deepest friendship and love ... not only... when your moments are high ... but when they are low ... not only ... when you remember clearly ... Who you are ... but when you forget ... not only... when you are acting with love ... but when you are not ... I further announce ... before God and these here present ... that I will seek always ... to see the Light of Divinity ... within you ... and seek always ... to share the Light of Divinity... within me ... even, and especially ... in whatever moments of darkness may come.



It is my intention ... to be with you forever ... in a Holy Partnership of the soul ... that we may do God's work together ... sharing all that is good within us ... with all those ... whose lives we touch.

Minister to the Groom: **John**, do you choose to grant **Mary's** request that you be her husband?

Groom: I do.



Exchange the Rings

Minister: Please then, both of you, take hold of the rings you would give each other (**Bride and Groom exchange rings**) ... and repeat after me: With this ring ... I thee wed ... I now take your ring ... and give it place upon my hand ... **(They place the rings on each others' hands.)** ... that all may see and know of my love for you.

And so now, inasmuch as you **John**, and you, **Mary**, have announced the truths that are already written in your hearts and have witnessed the same in the presence of these, your friends, and the One Living Spirit – we observe joyfully that you have declared yourself to be husband and wife.



You may kiss each other.

Unity Candle



Bride and Groom light Unity Candle.

OR

Sand Ceremony



Bride and Groom pour the sands .

Blessing for a Marriage

By James Dillet Freeman

May your marriage bring you all the exquisite excitements a marriage should bring.
And may life grant you also patience, tolerance, and understanding.

May you always need one another
not so much to fill your emptiness as to help you know your fullness.

A mountain needs a valley to be complete
the valley does not make the mountain less, but more
and the valley is more a valley because it has a mountain towering over it.
So let it be with both of you.

May you need one another, but not out of weakness.

May you want one another, but not out of lack.

May you entice one another, but not compel one another.

May you embrace one another, but not encircle one another.

May you succeed in all the important ways with one another
and not fail in the little graces.

May you look for things to praise, often say, *I Love You!*
And take no notice of small faults.

If you have quarrels that push you apart,
May both of you hope to have good sense enough to take the first step back.

May you enter into the mystery, which is the awareness of one another's presence
no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side-by-side,
and warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even distant cities.

May you have happiness and may you find it making one another happy.

May you have love, and may you find it loving one another!

Closing Prayer

Minister: *Spirit of Love and Life, out of this whole world, two souls have found each other. Their destinies shall now be woven into one design and their perils and their joys shall not be known apart.*

John and Mary, *may your home be a place of happiness for all who enter it; a place where the old and the young are renewed in each other's company; a place for growing and a place for sharing; a place for music and a place for laughter; a place for prayer and a place for love.*

May the beauty and the bounty of your love for one another constantly enrich those who are nearest to you; may your work be a joy of your life that serves the world, and may your days be good and long upon the earth. Amen





Introduce the couple

Bride gets her bouquet from the Maid of Honor.

Minister: *Now it is my privilege to introduce to you,
Mr. and Mrs. John Smith.*

Recessional

