Rite of Entry into the MARRIAGE Catechumenate

***This rite should ordinarily be celebrated during Mass (after the homily), although it could be celebrated outside of Mass. If multiple couples are going through the rite together, the text should be adapted accordingly. It also should be adapted if one party is not baptized (e.g. replacing the “Sacrament of Matrimony” with “marriage” and possibly modifying the gifts).***

INTRODUCTION

**Priest:**

 N. and N., please come forward.

*(Engaged couple stands before the congregation.)*

Dear brothers and sisters, today we have the privilege of witnessing a special moment in the life of N. and N. We share in the joy of their recent engagement and their desire to enter marriage in the Church. They come before us, the family of God, to begin a time of prayer, formation, discernment, and preparation for the Sacrament of Matrimony. The Church accompanies them with her maternal care, as they seek to deepen their relationship with Christ and their love for one another.

Engagement is not only a promise of love but also a time to grow in faith, to discern God's call, and to prepare for the great gift of marriage. As N. and N. enter into this period of preparation and formation, they ask for our prayers that they may walk together in unity, love, and openness to God’s grace.

PRAYER FOR the ENGAGED Couple

**Priest:**

Let us pray for N. and N., who desire to deepen their commitment to one another through prayer, discernment, and participation in the life of the Church. May they grow in mutual understanding, patience, and trust as they journey toward the Sacrament of Matrimony.

*(Pause for a period of silent prayer. Then, continue with the following intercessory prayer, said with hands extended.)*

Lord God, you are the source of all love. Guide the hearts of N. and N. as they grow in love and faith. May they trust in your plan for their lives as they prepare to enter the holy vocation of marriage. Through Christ our Lord.

**All reply**:

Amen.

**Priest**:

N. and N., the Church congratulates you on your engagement and accompanies you during your preparation for marriage. May it be a period of grace and growth for both of you. During this time of formation, you are invited to deepen your understanding of God’s design for marriage, to develop your relationship with God and each other, to grow in prayer and participation in the life of the Church, and to discern the lifelong commitment you are preparing to make. This is a time to focus on building a strong foundation for a lifelong, holy, and joyful marriage.

Giving of Gifts

*(The priest may present one or more of the following symbols of faith as gifts from the parish.)*

1. **BIBLE**

**Priest** *(while handing a Bible to the couple):*

Receive this Bible, the Word of God, as a guide for your journey. Read it often so it may be a lamp to your feet and a light for your path, drawing you closer to God and to each other.

**2. COUPLE’S PRAYER**

**Priest** *(while handing the prayer card to the couple):*

Receive this couple’s prayer as a reminder that God walks with you in every moment of your journey together. Pray it regularly, inviting Christ to be the center of your relationship.

1. **CRUCIFIX**

**Priest** *(while handing the crucifix to the couple):*

Receive this crucifix as a sign of Christ’s sacrificial love, which is the foundation of your love for each other. Embrace it as a reminder to imitate his self-giving love in all that you do.

Conclusion

**Priest**:

As a parish community, let us continue to support N. and N. with our prayers and witness. May this time of engagement be one of grace-filled preparation for entering the life-long covenant of marriage.

*(The couple returns to their seats. The Creed is then said and the Mass continues as normal.)*