

## What is Marriage?

Ladies and gentlemen, my name is [ ] and I am the Deputy Superintendent Registrar who will conduct this ceremony and with me is [ ] the Deputy Registrar who will look after the couples legal paperwork.

May I have your full names please.

On behalf of [ ] and [ ] I would like to welcome you all here today to share with them in this wedding ceremony. Through their vows they are making a commitment to each other, and through your presence you are expressing your support for them.

However, I must ask that if any person here present knows of any lawful impediment to this marriage then you should declare it now.

Marriage is a desire by two people to share themselves and their experiences with each other, and a willingness to accept each other for who they are.

Marriage means making a commitment to developing co-operation, friendship and mutual respect. It calls for understanding, honesty, patience, and of course humour! Marriage is where each partner cares for the other and supports them in all that they do.

It demands courage – the courage to be open, the courage to grow and change and the courage to sort out together, the tasks of everyday living.

Marriage requires closeness and distance – closeness for a couple growing together but enough distance to allow each partner to be

an individual. A good partner in such a marriage will be loving and caring and above all a best friend.

It is in this spirit that [ ] and [ ] are now before us. In each other's company they have found fulfilment and love. They now wish to affirm their relationship with this marriage.

[ ] and [ ] we celebrate with you today. We are glad to join with you in the solemnisation of your marriage, to witness your vows and to support you in your intentions for your future lives together.

**Would you both please stand.**

Before you are joined in matrimony, I have to remind you both of the solemn and binding character of the vows you are about to make. **Marriage in this country means the union of two people, voluntarily entered into for life, to the exclusion of all others.**

I am now going to ask each of you to declare that you know of no lawful reason why you may not be joined in matrimony to each other.

**GROOM/ PARTNER 1: "I declare that I know of no legal reason why I, (AB), may not be joined in marriage to (CD)."**

**BRIDE/ PARTNER 2: "I declare that I know of no legal reason why I, (AB), may not be joined in marriage to (CD)."**

**REGISTRAR to GROOM/PARTNER 1:** “Will you take [ ] to be your lawful wedded wife/husband to be loving and faithful to her/him for the rest of your lives together?”

**REGISTRAR to BRIDE/ PARTNER 2:** “Will you take [ ] to be your lawful wedded husband/wife to be loving and faithful to him/her for the rest of your lives together?”

Now the moment has come for this couple to make their marriage contract with each other.

**GROOM / PARTNER 1:** “I (AB) take you (CD) to be my wedded wife (or husband)”.

**BRIDE / Partner 2:** “I (AB) take you (CD) to be my wedded husband (or wife)”.

[ ] and [ ], a wedding ring is the ancient and traditional way of sealing the contract you have just made.

It is the unbroken circle which symbolises unending and everlasting love and is an outward sign, of the lifelong promise, you have just made to each other.

**GROOM / PARTNER 1:** “I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and affection. Wear it with happiness and pride, today tomorrow and always.”

**BRIDE / PARTNER 2:** “I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and affection. Wear it with happiness and pride, today tomorrow and always.”

[ ] and [ ], you have both made the declarations required by law, have exchanged rings and then made solemn promises to each

other, in the presence of your family and friends gathered here today.

Let the world now recognise that you are married.

May you treasure this trust and responsibility, may neither failure nor misfortune ever part you, as you go onto live full and rich lives together.

**Congratulations to you both, you may congratulate each other.**

**Signing of the legal document**