

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY - THE ORDER OF THE SERVICE**

### **THE PROCESSIONAL**

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn: Aysor Yergnayinkin

(This Day the Celestials)

The Blessing of the Rings

The Exhortation

The Exchange of Vows

Hymn: Ourakh ler Soorp Yegeghetsi

(Rejoice, O Holy Church)

The Trisagion

The Litany of the Faithful

Reading of the Epistle to the Ephesians

The Gospel Reading

The Crowning

The Prayer of Crowning

Hymn: Ov Yeranelit

(O Thou Blessed of All)

Removal of the Crowns

Blessing of the Common Cup of Wine

Prayer of Dismissal

The Lord's Prayer

## **The Wedding Service**

Holy Matrimony is a Sacrament of the Armenian Church in which a man and a woman solemnly vow before Christ, the priest and the congregation to be true to each other for life. Their conjugal union is blessed by Christ through the Church.

The marriage ceremony of the Armenian Church is steeped in ritual and symbolism. Each of the acts performed during the ceremony has special meaning and significance.

The ceremony is in two parts. The first part consists of the exchange of rings, the joining of right hands and the vows. The couple is now married. The second part is the "Crowning" or Blessing Ceremony; wherein, the couple receives the blessings of the Lord as well as the responsibility to serve the Lord.

### **The Rings**

The rings are blessed by the priest who takes them to his hand and makes the sign of the cross over them. He exhorts both bride and groom by saying: "The King shall rejoice in Thy strength O Lord, and in Thy salvation he shall be exceedingly glad. Hear my daughter and see, the King longs for your beauty".

The rings are placed on the ring finger. The rings are the symbols of betrothal from the most ancient times. They are a sign of a never-ending love.

### **The Exchange of Vows**

The vows are exchanged wherein the couple promises God that they will remain married until death and they will always be faithful to God.

### ***Priest:***

Behold, beloved children by divine ordinance, and in accordance with the canons of the holy patriarchs, you have come to this holy church to be crowned and wedded lawfully in holy matrimony. May God keep you in mutual love and in one accord, to make you attain a ripe old age, and to make you worthy of the unfading heavenly crown.

Yet you should realize that there are in this world all kinds of manner of tribulations. There is sickness, there is poverty and there are other afflictions and trials. We pray God to keep you away from all such tribulations. Nevertheless, it is God's commandment that you two are in bounden duty

to help and succor one another until death.

*(Priest shall ask the Groom):* My son (name of the Groom) do you promise to be faithful and loving husband to (name of Bride) according to God's holy ordinance, as long as you both shall live?

**Groom:**

Yes, Reverend Father, I do, by the will of God.

*(The Priest shall ask the Bride):* My daughter (name of the Bride) do you promise to be faithful and loving wife to (name of the Groom) according to God's holy ordinance, as long as you both shall live?

**Bride:**

Yes, Reverend Father, I do, by the will of God.

*(The Priest shall say to both):* Of these, your words, God who is invisibly seated on the Holy Altar, is witness, also our guardian angels, this Holy Church, the Holy Cross, the Holy Gospel, the clergy, and all these people, shall they also all be witness to your promise?

*(The Groom and the Bride shall answer together):* Yes, Reverend Father, let them be witness.

### **LORDSHIP AND FAITHFULNESS** (Der yev Henazant/Havadarim)

The explanation at the beginning of the ceremony asks the Groom and the Bride to express their covenant to each other and to the church.

### **The Joining of Right Hands**

The priest then joins the couple's right hands remembering in prayer how God "took the hands of Eve and put it into the hands of Adam" and to symbolize the "oneness" of the couple.

### **The Rite of Crowning**

The rite of crowning is the climax of the wedding service. The crowns are the signs of the glory and the honour with which God crowns them during the Sacrament. The groom and the bride are crowned as the king and the queen of their own little kingdom, which they will rule with wisdom, justice, and integrity. The crowns also signify martyrdom, as every true marriage involves immeasurable self-sacrifice to each other and to God. The braids (narods) are red, white, and green. The red and the white symbolize the sacrifice of Christ, reminding us that marriage is a sacrifice. The green symbolizes our hope that there will be growth in the marriage. The Blessing prayer that the Lord gives the couple wisdom, integrity, oneness of mind, and that they become a "people of God".

## **The Blessing of the Common Cup of Wine**

This part of the service is to remind us of the marriage at Cana of Galilee which was blessed by Christ's presence.

In remembrance of the blessing, wine is given to the bride and groom. This is the common Cup of life, denoting the mutual sharing of joy and sorrow, the token of a life of harmony.

Husband and wife no longer live solely for themselves, but for each other in service to Christ.

## **Prayer of Dismissal**

At the end of the service, the priest blesses the couple, asking Christ to "protect them under the shadow of Thy holy and honourable cross in peace". Thus, God's grace is imparted to them to live together in His love, mutually fulfilling and perfecting each other.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy Kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom,  
And the power, and the glory,  
Forever and ever.  
Amen

Hayr mer vor hergins yes,  
Soorp yeghitzi anoon ko;  
Yegestze arkayoutyoon ko;  
Yeghitzin gamk ko; Vorbes hergins yev hergri,  
Uzhatz mer hanabazort door mez aysor,  
Togh mez uzbardis mer  
Vorbes yev menk toghoomk merotz  
bardabanatz;  
Yev mi danir uzmez ee portzootyoon,  
Ayl purgya ee chare.  
Zee ko ee arkayoutyoon,  
Yev zorootyoon, Yev park,  
Haveedianus, haveedeneetz,  
Amen.