

Who has the honour of presenting this woman to be married to this man?

Minister: (GROOM) and (BRIDE) have not come here tonight to make a solemn promise or to exchange a sacred vow. (GROOM) and (BRIDE) have come here to make **public** their love for each other; to give notice to their truth; to declare their choice to live and partner and grow together- 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.

If anyone present knows a reason why (GROOM) and (BRIDE) may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now or forever hold your peace.

(GROOM) and (BRIDE), if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

They've also come here tonight in the further hope that their ritual bonding will help bring us **all** closer together. If you are here tonight with a spouse or a partner, let this ceremony be a reminder- a rededication of your own loving bond. We'll begin by asking the question: Why get married? (GROOM) and (BRIDE) have answered this question for themselves, and they've told me their answer. Now I want to ask them one more time, so they can be sure of their answer, certain of their understanding, and firm in their commitment to the truth they share.

(Minister gets 2 red roses from the table...)

This is the ceremony of the roses, in which (GROOM) and (BRIDE) share their understandings, and commemorate that sharing. Now, (GROOM) and (BRIDE) you told me 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 is 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... resides **within** you...

... and that you are not each marrying the other in hopes of **getting** these things, but in

hopes of *giving* these gifts, that the other might have them in even greater abundance.

Is that your firm understanding this afternoon? ((GROOM) and (BRIDE) say, “It is”)

And (GROOM) and (BRIDE), you have told me 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 an 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 this afternoon?

(They say, “It Is”).

Finally, (GROOM) and (BRIDE), you have said to me that you do not see marriage as producing *obligations*, but rather as providing *opportunities*...

... opportunities for growth? For the 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?

(They say, “It Is”).

I now give you these red roses, symbolizing 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 understandings with love.

(optional) (GROOM) reads his wedding vows to (BRIDE)

(optional) (BRIDE) reads her wedding vows to (GROOM)

Now, please each of you 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.

(Minister gives (GROOM) the rose with (BRIDE)'s ring on the stem, and (BRIDE) the rose with (GROOM)'s ring on it.)

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

(They each remove the rings from the stems, giving them to the minister, who holds them in his hand as he says...)

A circle is the symbol of the Sun, and the Earth, and the universe. It is a symbol of holiness, and the perfection and peace. It is also the symbol of the eternity of spiritual truth, love, and life... that which has no beginning and no end. And in this moment, (GROOM) and (BRIDE) choose for it to also be a symbol of unity, but not of possession; of joining, but not of restricting; of encirclement, but not of entrapment. For love cannot be possessed, cannot can it be restricted. And the soul can never be entrapped.

Now (GROOM) and (BRIDE), please take these rings you wish to give, one to the other.

(They take each other's rings).

(GROOM), please repeat after me.

"I, (GROOM) ask you, (BRIDE)... 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 those here present... that I will seek always to see the Light of the 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 together God's work... sharing all that is good within us... with all those whose lives we touch.

The minister turns to (BRIDE).

(BRIDE), do you choose to grant (GROOM)'s request that you be his wife?

(She answers, "I do.")

Now, (BRIDE), please repeat after me.

“I, (BRIDE) ask you, (GROOM)... 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 those here present... that I will seek always to see the Light of the 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 together God’s work... sharing all that is good within us... with all those whose lives we touch.

(Minister turns to (GROOM).)

(GROOM) do you choose to grant (BRIDE)’s request that you be her husband?

(He answers; “I do”.)

Please then, both of you, take hold of the rings you would give each other, and repeat after me: With this ring... I thee wed... I take now the ring you give to me... (they exchange rings)... and give it place upon my heart...(they place the rings on their hands) ... That all may see and know... all of my love for you.

(The minister closes...)

We recognize with full awareness that only a couple can administer the sacrament of marriage to each other, and only a couple can satisfy it. Neither my church, nor any power vested in me by the State, can grant me the authority to declare what only two hearts can declare, and what only two souls can make real.

And so now, inasmuch as *you*, (GROOM), and *you*, (BRIDE), 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.

Let us now join in prayer.

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

(GROOM) and (BRIDE), 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 others 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 those who are nearest to you be constantly enriched by the beauty and the bounty of your love for one another, may your days be good and long upon the Earth.

Amen, and Amen.

By the authority vested in me under the Marriage Act of the Province of Ontario and the Grace of God, I declare that from this day until the end of all days, you are now husband and wife.

(GROOM), you may kiss your Bride.

Signing of the Marriage Register

Minister: Ladies and gentlemen, let me present to you for the very first time, MR. & MRS. (GROOM) and (BRIDE) (Last Name)

Rose Wedding Ceremony from Neale Donald Walsh's book, *Conversations with God*