

Marriage: A Vocation of Service Together

TIPS FOR HOW TO INCLUDE SERVICE TO OTHERS IN YOUR WEDDING CELEBRATION

The sacrament of marriage is “directed toward the salvation of others; if [it] contribute(s) as well to personal salvation, it is through service to others that [it does] so.”

(Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1534)



You are about to embark on the next stage of your journey: to serve others as a married couple. Your wedding celebration begins your married life of service together. How do the choices you make about your wedding ceremony and reception reflect your commitment to serve others as a couple?

Here are a few ideas from Catholic Relief Services about how you can kick off your married life of service together through your wedding:

JEWELRY

How can you be of service to others through your wedding jewelry purchases? Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI reminds us “that purchasing is always a moral—and not simply economic—act” (Caritas in Veritate, No. 66). You can live out this important dimension of our faith by supporting jewelers that use stones and metals mined with respect for people and the environment.

In developing countries, the wealth created by mining metals and minerals generally fails to benefit local communities and often devastates the poor. Make a commitment as a couple to uphold the dignity of every human life and care for creation by purchasing diamonds that are certified conflict free and jewelry made from fair trade precious metals and stones. Another alternative is to use a family heirloom or purchase used or antique jewelry. Visit ethicaltrade.crs.org/wedding for more ideas and a list of ethical jewelers.

CRS is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States, providing assistance to people in need in more than 100 countries around the world.

Ethical trade is a transparent commitment by a company to treat workers and suppliers fairly, care for the environment and invest in the community.

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PRAYERS

During your wedding ceremony, include a petition in the General Intercessions that invites the community gathered with you to pray that your marriage will strengthen you for service to those in need.

SAMPLE PETITION:

For _____, that their marriage will strengthen them to commit their lives to service of others, especially to those who are poor and suffering throughout the world. We pray to the Lord ...

GIFTS & FAVORS

Invite your guests to purchase gifts that benefit the poor throughout the world by buying fair trade items as wedding favors or registering for fair trade wedding gifts. Get ideas or create a fair trade wedding registry through CRS' partner Serrv.

Many couples choose to make a symbolic offering to the poor in the celebration of the sacrament of marriage. You might do this by bringing up a basket of nonperishable goods with the offertory gifts or by giving a donation in honor of your guests in lieu of a reception favor. You can offer a donation to support the Church's work to assist those in need around the world through Catholic Relief Services.

ethicaltrade.crs.org/wedding



ETHICAL TRADE



Thank you for making service to others a part of your wedding celebration, and blessings on your continued journey together!