

Uncommon Wedding Vows – Rose Ritual

From the wedding ceremony of Bride Groom Walsch
(Author of *Conversations with God*)

Groom and Bride have not come here tonight to make a solemn promise or to exchange a sacred vow. Bride and Groom have come here to make *public* their love for each other; to honour 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.

They've also come here tonight in the further hope that their ritual of bonding will help bring us *all* closer together. If you are here tonight with a spouse or 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 the 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.

(Celebrant gets two red roses from table)

This is the Ceremony of Roses, in which Bride and Groom share their understandings, and commemorate that sharing.

Now Bride and Groom, you have 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 in being owned or 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 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 tonight?

(They say, "It is.")

And Bride and Groom, 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 and 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 tonight?

(They say, "It is.")

Finally, Bride and Groom, you have said to me that you do not see marriage as producing *obligations* but rather as providing *opportunities*, opportunities for growth, for 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, symbolising 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.

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.

(Celebrant gives Bride the rose with Groom's ring on the stem, and Groom the rose with Bride's ring on it.)

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

(They each remove the rings from the stems, giving them to the Celebrant, 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 of 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, Bride and Groom 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, nor 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 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 Celebrant 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. *(She makes the same vow as Groom).*

(Celebrant 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. Now I take the ring you give to me *(they exchange rings)* and place it upon my hand *(they place the rings on their hands)* that all may see and know of my love for you.

(The Celebrant closes)

We recognise with full awareness that only a couple can Celebrate the sacrament of marriage to each other, and only a couple can sanctify it. Church, nor any power vested in me by the Province, 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, Bride, and you, Groom, 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.

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 other's 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 work be a joy of your life that serves the world, and may your days be good and long upon the Earth.