

HOLY UNION CEREMONY

[I begin by telling them:]

"You may join hands." (It puts them at ease to be able to hold on to each other.)

True marriage is more than the joining in the bonds of matrimony of two persons. In its tight relation, it is the uniting of two souls already attuned to each other. When such a true bond already exists, it is proper that an outer acknowledgment be made. This acknowledgment is the prime object of this gathering and this ceremony. We are here to bear witness to the entry into the closer relationship of these two beloved friends, who are already one in spirit.

You are now taking into your care and keeping the happiness of the one in all the world who you love best, and, by the same token, something of the happiness of all whom you love and who love you. This is a blessed privilege; and a spiritual responsibility.

You are adding to your life, not only the affection and the response that your heart desires, not only the happy companionship of hours together, but a deep trust as well. It is the implied trust of loving. You are finding in each other that which complements your life. You are agreeing to be a light and tower of strength to each other. You are agreeing to carry a part of each other's responsibilities. You are entering on an act of pure faith in which you give of yourself to the utmost.

The estate of wedlock is a holy one, not to be entered into lightly, and only under the guidance of infinite wisdom and divine love.

And now, will you, _____, and you _____ bow your heads, as we silently turn within to consecrate and dedicate your life together. (At this time, I ask those in attendance to bow heads in prayer, as we each in our own way bless this "HOLY UNION.")

_____ and _____, the light of God surrounds you. The love of God enfolds you. The power of God protects you. And the presence of God watches over you. Wherever you are, God is.

(These vows are read to each partner.)

Minister: "Do you take to be your Life Partner, to love her/him unconditionally, to inspire her/him with courage and true thoughts, and always to be unto her/him an

understanding friend? Please signify by saying, "I do."

Minister: "Are their rings provided for the ceremony?"

These rings represent the endless spiritual love that links you, spirit to spirit and soul to soul.

Minister: (Vows given to one, then to the other, if double ring ceremony.) Please repeat after me, "With this ring, I thee wed, and with it I give all the treasures of my mind, heart, and hands."

Minister: In the words of the poet, Kahlil Gibran, author of "The Prophet."

Then Almitra spoke again and said, "And what of marriage, Master?"

And he answered, saying:

You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.
You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.
Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you;
Love one another but make not a bond of love;
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup, but drink not from one cup.
Give one another of your bread, but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each of you be alone,
even as the strings of a lute are alone, though they quiver with the same music.
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.
For only the hand of life can contain your hearts.
And stand together, yet not too near together,
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

And now, and , please join hands. Under the authority of the law of our land and in the name of the Holy Spirit who performs every true marriage, I pronounce you Partners in Life in this Holiest of Unions. You may seal this promise with a kiss.

Minister: I would like to close this ceremony with an American Indian Marriage Blessing:

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other.

Now there is no more loneliness, for each of you will be companion to the other.
Now you are two bodies, but there is only one life before you.
Go now to your dwelling place, to enter into the days of your togetherness.
And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

God bless you both.