

QUAKER: A Quaker wedding requires prior approval from the monthly meeting of the Society of Friends. The marriage itself takes place during a meeting for worship where those in attendance meditate quietly. The bridal couple may enter the meeting together or in the usual processional, but the bride is not given away. On reaching the head of the aisle, the bridal party sits down on benches facing the meeting. After the traditional Quaker silence, the bride and groom rise, join hands and say their vows to each other. The groom speaks his promises first, then the bride. No third person pronounces them man and wife because Friends believe that God alone can create such a union.

After the bride and groom complete their vows and take their seats, the marriage certificate is brought for them to sign -- the bride using her new married name for the first time. The certificate is then read aloud by a person designated in advance. The meeting continues while those assembled share in the worship through prayer or spoken messages. When they sense that the meeting should close, the bride and groom shake hands and leave the room. All guests sign the marriage certificate before leaving.

Neither a bridal party nor an exchange of rings is necessary at a Quaker wedding, but both are customary today. The use of music and floral decorations is left up to the individual couple, but the traditional Quaker wedding is a very simple ceremony.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE: Readers of the Christian Science faith are not ordained and may not perform marriages. When members of the faith marry, the ceremony may be performed by an ordained minister or proper legal authority.

MORMON: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has two kinds of marriage. The first is for the faithful deemed fit for marriage in the temples of the church by members of the Holy Priesthood. Such couples are wed "for time and all eternity" instead of "until death you do part" and their children are believed to belong to them for all eternity as well. Mormons who are not considered worthy of marriage in a temple are wed in civil ceremonies performed by bishops of the church or other legal authorities.

ROMAN CATHOLIC WEDDINGS

Formal Catholic weddings seldom take place during Lent (the forty days from Ash Wednesday to Easter) or Advent (the four weeks before Christmas) because these are periods of penance. Marriages may be performed at these times under certain restrictions and with special permission. Flowers, for example, are not permitted in the church during the last two weeks of Lent. Catholic weddings may take place on Sunday if there is no conflict with the parish schedule.

When both the bride and the groom are Catholic, the banns of marriage are published in both parish churches at the principal Masses on three Ceremonies, continued on page 20

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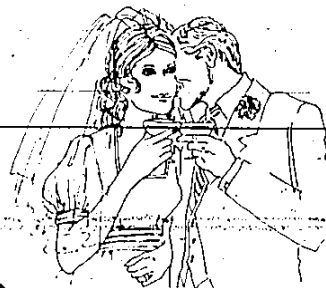
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