The Nestorian Form of the Solemnization of Matrimony (Badger translation)

East Syriac Liturgy (Addai and Mari, Theodore, Nestorius) (ancient origin; anaphoras of the 3r

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

The Espousals and the Marriage

¶ All shall assemble in the house of the damsel's father, or, if she have no father, in that of her brother, or uncle, or of one whom she will, where meat shall be set before the company; and the Priest shall inquire about the settlement of the dowry in the presence of all; and after this is decided by the father, brother, or by one of the kindred of the bride, before the Priests, Deacons, and true believers, then the Priest shall lift up his voice, and shall call upon all present to bear witness to the same, and laying hold of the right hand of the steward* of the bridegroom he shall address him as follows: THOU hast come forward, dearly beloved brother, with a pure and free will, and with an undoubting heart, to espouse A. B., the daughter of the believer C. B., to be unto D. E. a wife and helpmate according to the law of CHRIST, and the ordinance of the Church. Dost thou engage to weigh out as her dowry four hundred pieces of silver, and one denarius as the due of the Church?

R. I do. ¶ And all present shall bear witness. Then the Priest shall turn to the steward of the bride, and laying hold of his right hand he shall address him as follows: Dost thou give the damsel A. B., the daughter of the believer C. B., to D. E. the son of the believer F. E., to be unto him a wife and helpmate, according to the ordinance of the Church, and the law of CHRIST; and dost thou accept her apportioned dowry; and doth there remain no further let or hindrance in this matter? Is this damsel sound in her mind, senses, and members; is her body whole and free from open and hidden defect; and does she willingly come forward to this blessed act, not forcibly, but with a free will? And does there exist no pre-contract, or any other cause of dissolution, separation, or divorce whatever?

¶ If he shall answer Yea, then the Priest shall join their hands in the form of a cross, and shall say: The Living God and His holy Angels, His blessed Prophets and Apostles, and this sanctified assembly of pure Priests and sacred Deacons, of honourable elders and orthodox and elect brethren, bear witness, that this bridegroom has engaged to hold this bride as his own self in every thing meet and proper appertaining to the nurture of body and soul, in youth and in old age, in health and in sickness, in joy and in sorrow, that the saying of the Gospel may be fulfilled: A man shall leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh; therefore they are not twain but one flesh; and whatsoever God hath joined together let no man put asunder. And also that the saying of S.

Paul may be fulfilled: Husbands, love your wives, even as CHRIST loved His Church and gave Himself for it. Do ye, therefore, consent to this promise which has been made?

¶ If they shall answer Yea, the Priest shall bless them, and say: The LORD JESUS CHRIST perfect your deed and bring it to pass, and make you to rejoice in pure and undivided love, that you may be fruitful in the procreation of sons and daughters, and that He may save you from the malice of wicked men, and from the rebellious devils. Amen. Here endeth the service of the Taking of Hands, and the Espousals.

The Marriage.

¶ The Cup, Ring, Cross, and Hnâna,* being set in order, the Priest shall begin with Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men. Our FATHER, &c. Send down, O LORD, Thy peace among us, and let Thy safety dwell with this company: let Thy help ever be with us, Thy right hand rest upon us, and Thy Cross be to us a wall of defence and a strong refuge, that we may hide under its wings from the face of the wicked one and his hosts, now and at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. Psalm xlv. ¶ Then shall be said: O household of the bridegroom, trust in the LORD, He is their help and their shield. O household of the bride, trust in the LORD, He is their help and their shield. O household of the brideman, trust in the LORD, He is their help and their shield.

O household of the bridemaid, trust in the LORD, He is their help and their shield. The LORD hath been mindful of us. Bless the household of the bridegroom, and bless the household of the bride; bless the household of the brideman, both small and great. The LORD increase you more and more, you and your children. Ye are the blessed of the LORD Who made heaven and earth; for heaven, even the heavens are the LORD's. We will bless the LORD from this time forth for evermore. Change. Speak, speak, O Church of our SAVIOUR, thou bride of the King, for thy beauty is excellent and to be desired. The Eternal LORD in His love hath espoused thee as His bride.

Prayer.

Build up, O LORD, through Thy Word, and adorn with Thy hope, and establish in Thy mercy, this work which Thy servants have entered upon, that they may ascribe unto Thee glory, honour, praise, and worship, at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. ¶ Then shall be said this Anthem: Show yourselves joyful unto the LORD, sing, rejoice and give thanks. Rejoice and exult, O believing Church, thou daughter of the King of the universe, in the Bridegroom Who has espoused thee, and caused thee to enter into His bridal chamber, and Who for a dowry has given thee His precious Body and Blood, and by the sacrifice of Himself hath cleansed and sanctified thee, and made thee His adorned bride, and hath mingled in thee a spiritual drink for all thy children, [Here the Priest shall mingle water and wine in the cup,] and behold they joy in the sanctuary, and we also with them cry out and say: Glory be to Thee, O LORD. [Repeat.]

The LORD will give His people the blessing of peace. Bless, O LORD, through Thy grace this bridegroom and bride by Thy Cross, and adorn the brideman and bridemaid with chastity. Holy and reverend is His Name. O Thou Holy One Who sanctifiest all, Who art praised of all the saints, bless this cup of Thy worshippers, and cause Thy grace to rest upon it. At all times. O LORD, make this bridegroom and this bride to be of one accord, and bind them together in peace and love, and us with them. He blessed them so that they multiplied exceedingly. Pour forth Thy blessing, O CHRIST, and bless this ring and this cup, that the bridegroom and the bride may be drunk with love and concord. O LORD, until the end of time. Keep, O LORD, in Thy compassion, this bridegroom, and save through Thy Cross this bride, and help them by Thy grace, that they may ever ascribe glory to Thy majesty.

Lift upon us the light of Thy countenance, and we shall be saved. O Thou merciful and compassionate One, turn not away Thine eyes from us; but send us pity, mercy, and salvation out of Thy treasury. Our help is in the Name of the LORD. Let the help of Thy mercies, O LORD, be the support of our weakness, and enlighten the motions of our thoughts, that we may ever give thanks unto Thee for Thy grace. In His holy Name we have put our trust. CHRIST, in Whose Name we are met together, and on Whose grace we depend, keep us all by His Cross, and perfect His will in us. Open unto me the gates of righteousness. At whose door shall we knock but at Thy door, O Thou Compassionate One? And from whom shall we derive help but from Thee, O Thou Who art full of pity?

Turn us, O GOD our SAVIOUR. As the dove returned to Noah bearing an olive branch, so may our prayers return unto us bearing pity and mercy. The LORD is King for evermore. O Thou Who sittest at the right hand of the FATHER, bless this our assembly with Thy right hand, and by the arm of Thy mighty power keep all those who are purchased with Thy blood. He shall speak peace to His servants and to His people. The peace which our SAVIOUR gave to His disciples in the upper chamber rest upon this cup, that those who drink thereof may receive a blessing. Answer us, O GOD our SAVIOUR. O GOD, Who didst answer Jonas when he prayed unto Thee from the depths of the sea, answer Thy people who call upon Thee in these troublous times. As the axe which cleaveth the earth. May that prayer, O LORD, which went up from the sea, from the den, and from the fiery furnace, open a door to our prayers and supplications.

Those who stand in the house of the LORD. Thy worshippers stand in Thy courts, and flee for refuge to Thy Cross; multiply blessings unto them out of Thy house full of help. Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon us. O Thou Who hearest the prayers of Thy servants, and Who answerest the petitions of Thy worshippers, hear our prayers and the voice of our supplications, and in Thy mercy answer our requests. And He delivered them out of all their troubles. All those in trouble call upon Thee, and all who are distressed flee unto Thee for refuge; preserve Thou their lives, and deliver them from the evil one. He blessed them so that they multiplied exceedingly. Abraham blessed Isaac, and Isaac blessed Jacob; let the blessing of these three rest upon all this people. The LORD shall dwell there for ever. Bless,

O LORD, this cup, and let Thy grace rest upon it, and give us safety and peace that we may ever praise Thy Trinity.

I will bless the LORD at all times. Blessed is Thy setting which shall gather us to Thy house full of all aid, and blessed is Thy pity which preserves us by night and by day. By day and by night. The prayers of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of JESUS our Saviour, be to us at all times a wall of defence by day and by night. Seek the LORD and His strength. O ye prophets, pray for safety, and ye Apostles for peace, and ye martyrs, priests, and doctors, may your prayers be to us a wall of defence. Seek the LORD, and pray before Him. Pray and supplicate CHRIST, O our pure Father ———, whose love thou didst love, that the people who honour thy memory may be aided by thy prayers. Glory be to the FATHER, and to the SON, and to the HOLY GHOST. Rejoice and exult, O thou who art full of grace, the holy and chaste Virgin, Mary, the mother of CHRIST, because the archangel became a heavenly messenger unto thee, O thou Mother, who in virginity didst bring forth the Wonderful, Counsellor, and the Saviour of the world. We also bless thy virginity and say: Blessed art thou since thou didst merit to be a mother and handmaid to our LORD.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. He who blessed Abraham the righteous, and who saved Isaac, be with us and amongst us. The EL whom the chaste Jacob saw, may He with His right hand bless our assembly. The LORD who was with Joseph preserve our goings. The mighty GOD whom Moses saw be with us at all times. He who redeemed Joshua the son of Nun cause His right hand to rest upon us. The Shepherd of all who cleanses us keep us from the evil one and his power. The LORD who enriched Solomon increase the fruits of our earth. The High and Exalted One whom Isaiah saw cause His safety to dwell among us. May our prayers be accepted as were the prayers of Elijah and Elisha, and may our petitions be answered as was the petition of Daniel the just. And may JESUS, the LORD of the prophets, and the Crown of the Apostles, in whose name we have believed, keep us, and the glorious Trinity be with us from this time forth for evermore.

And let all the people say, Amen, Amen. O CHRIST, the Hope of His faithful ones, the Deliverer of those of His household, the Doer of the will of those who fear Him, and who layeth hold of the hand of His suppliants, who promised to His twelve, and through them to all nations, that whatsoever ye shall ask, believing, ye shall forthwith receive,—Behold, now, these Thy servants who are met together in Thy Name to celebrate the rite of espousals through Thy servants, (of which the ring which the bridegroom has given is a pledge and token of love, and the sign of the living cross is a witness between them, lest there should be any change in the covenant betwixt them made,) behold they knock at the door of Thy grace, and pray for mercy and compassion. Stretch forth the right hand of Thy Majesty, full of every blessing, and pour it forth upon the heads of Thy worshippers; bless them inwardly, and make them fruitful in every blessing, and multiply to them every good thing, as Thou didst to Abraham and the chaste Sarah his wife, in the beginning, that they may be strong in faith and in virtuous living; that like Isaac and Rebecca his wife, they may be saved

by the doing of good deeds; that like Jacob the father of the tribes they may be fruitful in procreation;

that like Zechariah and Elizabeth they may be rich in good works, and be a godly example to those who are near and to those afar off; and perfect and seal the act which they have entered upon agreeably with Thy will, and lay the foundation of their building upon the rock of faith. Bless, O LORD, in body and in soul, this bridegroom and his bride, increase their progeny, and make them fat with all good things. Bless and keep their sponsors who stand in the place of Thy messenger, [John the Baptist,] and make them co-partners in the joy of their brother, and in that of all those who participate in this mystery. Bless the ring which is a sign of the covenant and contract betwixt them made: bless the dowry which typifies the purity of their intentions; bless the wine in the cup which is a token that they are purchased with Thy blood; and bless us all that we may praise Thee with them, and cry out, and say: Praise be to Thee, and to the FATHER, and to the HOLY GHOST, for ever.

Prayer.

Have compassion upon us, O LORD, in Thy grace, and turn unto us, O Thou who art full of mercy, and do not deprive us of Thy sight and care, for our hope is in Thee, and upon Thee we do call day and night, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. Canon. Psalm xxxvii. 23—29. O LORD, Who didst direct the way of the servant to Laban the Aramean to take a wife unto Isaac his master, the son of Abraham, order this undertaking of Thy servants, and keep Thy worshippers, O LORD, through the prayers of Mary the blessed Mother, and of John who baptized his LORD, and of the Apostles who discipled Jews and Gentiles, and of the doctors who preached the truth, and of the martyrs who endured every kind of trial for the love of JESUS their King. The celebration of espousals among Christian people is comely, in which service the priest acts as mediator, and the ring is in confirmation of the promise made, and the cup of wine a symbol of the blood and water, and the living cross is a witness thereto, and the hnâna stands for the blessing of forgiveness which the people receive. Blessed is He Who ordained the rite in the beginning, and hath handed it down to us.

O Thou Bridegroom Whose crown fadeth not, and Whose marriage endeth not, give this bridegroom joy with his bride, and this bride with her bridegroom, and their sponsors. Make them co-partakers of Thy blessing, and gladden all now assembled to praise Thee, O Thou Whose Eternity is glorious. Doxology. O Thou Exalted One Who dwellest on high, and Whose praises are known to the lowest depths, let Thy grace rest upon this cup of Thy worshippers, and perfect the new work upon which they have entered. [Repeat.] The prayer of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of JESUS our Saviour, be to us ever a wall of defence by day and by night. Holy GOD, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy upon us.

Prayer.

O Thou Who openest Thy door to those who knock, and Who answerest the petitions of such as call upon Thee, open, O LORD our GOD, the door of mercy to our prayers, accept

our supplications, and in Thy mercy grant our requests out of Thy rich and overflowing treasure-house, O Thou righteous One Who withholdest not Thy gifts from Thy poor and needy worshippers, and from Thy servants who call upon and supplicate Thee at all times, and in every place, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. ¶ Then the priest shall take the cup in his hand, and say: We flee to Thy name, O LORD, [repeat,] and to the name of CHRIST, the hope of the just and righteous, Who ordereth the way of His servants, and accomplisheth the desire of those who fear Him, who is the nourisher of youth, and the supporter of old age. Bless, O LORD, these Thy servants who have espoused and who have been espoused, and bless the beloved ones who have been parties to the taking of hands on both sides, bless, keep, aid, and gladden them by Thy grace in that deed which they have undertaken, that they may ascribe unto Thee glory, honour, praise, and worship, for ever and ever.

¶ Here the priest shall sign himself, and taking the ring into his hands shall say:

O CHRIST, the true Bridegroom, Who manifestedst Thy truth unto Thy worshippers through a ring, bless, O LORD, this ring which we give by Thy grace; and gladden in Thy mercy the bride who shall receive it. For as by a ring the truth of Judah towards Tamar was brought to light, and by a ring the rule over Egypt was given to Joseph, and by a ring of the king and his great men the integrity of Daniel was established with the monarch of Babel; so also by this ring, which the merchants have extolled, the uprightness of the just has been made apparent, Joseph was honoured in the chariot, Daniel conquered in his truthfulness, and was introduced before kings. This is the ring wherewith the holy Church is espoused to the heavenly Bridegroom, and the body and blood of CHRIST is received for the forgiveness of sins. This is the ring wherewith Sarah was espoused to believing Abraham, the father of the faithful. This is the ring wherewith Rebecca was espoused unto Isaac through the means of Eliezer of Damascus. This is the ring wherewith Rachel was espoused unto Jacob, whose name was also called Israel. This is the ring through which Tamar escaped death. This is the ring which is constituted a sign of confirmation throughout all generations of the world. This is the ring wherewith all the treasuries of kings are sealed and opened. This is the ring wherewith brides are espoused, and whereby they are adorned in all wonderful things.

How marvellous art thou, O ring, wherewith wives are espoused to husbands, and bridegrooms to brides. Blessed is CHRIST Who hath manifested His truth to His worshippers through a ring. And now, O LORD, bless this ring through the prayers of Thy priests and saints, and may Thy name be magnified by Thy servants, and let them be blessed with all the blessings of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

¶ Then the priest shall sign the cup with the sign of the cross, with the ring, and shall then throw the ring into the cup discreetly. After which he shall take the cross into his hand, and say: We worship, O LORD, Thy holy cross, O our SAVIOUR, [repeat,] whereby salvation was brought unto mankind, whereat devils tremble, whereby many wonderful works have been wrought, and whereby the Holy Church is saved and espoused to the heavenly Bridegroom.

This is the holy cross which appeared in the heavens to Constantine, and through which he conquered his enemies. This is the holy cross the sign of which Moses betokened on the mountain top, and by which he slew Amalek. This is the holy cross of which Melchizedek was a sign. This is the holy cross for which the holy martyrs shed their blood. This is the holy cross which the sons of Ananias saw in the furnace, and by which they were saved from burning. This is the holy cross by which Daniel was saved from the wild beasts. This is the holy cross by which the troth of bridegroom and bride is confirmed. This is the holy cross which we revere with love and concord; by it may the faithfulness of thy servants be established, that they may be glad and rejoice now and ever.

¶ Here the Priest shall sign the cup as in the sacraments, and he shall throw the cross and the hnâna into the cup, and shall say: This cup of the espousals of our brother has been set apart, consecrated, and perfected, through the glorious priesthood, the LORD'S Cross, and the hnâna of the relics of the saints, in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen. ¶ Then the Priest shall make bare his head, and shall say: The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the love of GOD, &c. ¶ Here the Priest shall sign the cup thrice, and shall give it to the bridegroom, who shall drink two-thirds of it; and he shall sign the brideman therewith between the eyes. Then the Deacon shall take the cup to the bride, who shall drink what remains therein, and he shall sign the bridemaid betwixt the eyes.

The Blessing of the Bridal Attire.

Prayer. Unto Thee, O Thou Who art worshipped and adored, Who art of surpassing beauty and excellence, and lifted up above all by Thy eternity, the great King of glory, Whose existence is from everlasting, we offer praise, thanksgiving, and honour, at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. Psalm xciii. Prayer. Let our prayers be acceptable unto Thee, O LORD, and let our supplications come up before Thee, and pour out Thy benefits upon our necessities out of the treasury of Thy great compassion, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. ¶ Then shall follow this anthem: The LORD hath reigned and put on glorious apparel.—The children which shall be born and come after. Believers have put on incorruption and renewal through water and the SPIRIT, and since the Baptism of our SAVIOUR in Jordan the springs have teemed with holiness, and creation shall not be destroyed again with a flood, because in Jordan He appeared Who destroys transgression; and sinners shall no more be drowned in the sea, because in the font they are baptized and saved. Put on, therefore, O believers, incorruption and renewal through water and the SPIRIT, and cry aloud and say: O CHRIST, Who enrichest our souls, glory be to Thee.

Those who love the LORD hate evil. The Apostles who loved CHRIST, and preached JESUS our SAVIOUR, held the Cross in their hands as a spade, and weeded the earth, which was sunk in the darkness of heathenism, tilled it in faith, and sowed it with the word of life. Let us therefore honour them. Glory be to the FATHER, and to the SON, and to the HOLY GHOST. O Church, the adorned bride, the spouse of JESUS our SAVIOUR, may thy

children shout with praise like thunder from every quarter, and give thanks unto CHRIST the King, Who in His grace has highly adorned thee, and beautified thee with all heavenly beauty, through the SPIRIT which He hath imparted to thee. Therefore give thanks to Him and to His ministers. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Through the power of Thy right hand Thou hast appeared and saved us, O CHRIST, our SAVIOUR, therefore establish Thy Church, in Thy pity, and make all the dwellers therein to be of one accord, and bless and keep them. Let Thy great power, O our SAVIOUR, rest upon all the churches, and make all the Priests thereof to serve Thee in fear and with thanksgiving. And grant that with one accord, in faith and perfect love, we may ever supplicate and praise Thee, and say together: O LORD of all, answer us, in Thy pity, and have mercy upon us.

And let all the people say, Amen, Amen. Let the right hand of Thy mercy, O JESUS our LORD, rest upon this bridegroom and bride in Thy grace, and in Thy pity make them a blessed pair, and enrich their dwellings with wealth and all manner of possessions. Bless, O LORD, this bridegroom and bride, as Thou didst Abraham and Sarah his wife. Bless, O LORD, this bridegroom and bride, as Thou didst Isaac and Rebecca his wife. Bless, O LORD, this bridegroom and bride, as Thou didst Jacob and his wife Rachel. Bless, O LORD, this brideman, as Thou didst John the preacher of the SPIRIT. Bless, O LORD, this bridemaid, as Thou didst Elizabeth the cousin of Mary. Bless, O LORD, this cup, as Thou didst that in the upper room. Bless, O LORD, this hnâna, as Thou didst that which Thine own hands made. Bless, O LORD, this cross, as Thou didst the cross of Constantine. Bless, O LORD, this ring, as Thou didst the ring of Solomon. Bless, O LORD, these ornaments, as Thou didst the ornaments of Sarah and Rebecca. Bless, O LORD, our pure pastor, as Thou didst Simon the chief of the Apostles. Bless, O LORD, the choir of Priests, as Thou didst the company of Aaron. Bless, O LORD, the Deacons, as Thou didst the order of Stephen. Bless, O LORD, our master, who ministereth to our weakness. Bless, O LORD, those who are taught, and make them wise through the Scriptures of the SPIRIT.

Bless, O LORD, this place, and cause Thy peace to rest upon it. Bless, O LORD, this village, and surround it with a wall of defence. Bless, O LORD, the elders therein, as Thou didst Thy chosen servant Job. Bless, O LORD, the young, and adorn them in their youth. Bless, O LORD, the children, and keep them with the right hand of Thy mercy. Bless, O LORD, all our companions, as Thou didst Thy Twelve. Bless, O LORD, this house, as Thou didst the house of Zaccheus, which Thou enteredst. Bless, O LORD, the provisions thereof, as Thou didst the few loaves. Bless, O LORD, this attire, as Thou didst the mantle of Elijah. Bless, O LORD, this table, as Thou didst the table of righteous Abraham. Bless, O LORD, these vessels, as Thou didst the vessels at Cana. Bless, O LORD, all the world, and surround it with a wall of defence. Bless, O LORD, all in all, for Thou art the Blessed, the SON of the Blessed. And let us together give thanks to Thy holy Name, and through Thee to the FATHER, and the HOLY SPIRIT, for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer.

We pray Thee, O Thou Wise Ruler over all, Who carest for those of Thy household, Thou boundless Treasury overflowing with all help and benefits,—we pray Thee, O LORD, to turn and have pity upon us, as is Thy wont at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen.

Canon.

The bridegroom shall joy in Thy strength, O LORD, and in Thy salvation how greatly shall the bride rejoice. Ps. xxi. 1—8. Let this attire of Thy worshippers be blessed by the power of Thy grace, and let the help of Thine aid rest upon them, that they may give joy and gladness. May that blessing which was poured out upon the vestments of the first tabernacle, rest upon this attire and these garments of Thy worshippers. May this rite of espousals, which was drawn up by the fathers and spiritual doctors, and ordained to be celebrated after this manner by a synodal decree, be consummated in the name of the TRINITY, and by the sign of the Cross; and may their prayers be effectual in behalf of this bridegroom and bride, and in behalf of us all, that we may rejoice and be glad.

Prayer.

With Thy blessing, O LORD, may Thy servants be blessed, and with the care of Thy will may Thy worshippers be kept, and may the enduring safety of Thy Divinity, and the lasting peace of Thy Sovereignty, govern Thy people and Church throughout all ages of the world, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen.

Another.

The blessing of Him Who blesses all, the pity of Him Who has pity upon all, and the keeping of the adorable GOD be with us, amongst us, and round about us at all times, to keep us from the evil one and his powers, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. ¶ Then the Deacons shall take up the bridal attire, and the Priest shall lay his hands thereon, and say : GOD, Who formed the body and created the soul, [Repeat,] Who made man in His own image and likeness, and Who hath beautified clothing for his use, bless these garments, that they may give joy and gladness to such as shall wear them. And as garments cling to the members of man, so may these Thy servants cling to one another in love and affection, and continue in peace together, in Thy fear, through the mercy and grace of CHRIST, to Whom be glory, and upon us His mercy, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

¶ Here the Priest shall sign the robes with the sign of the cross. O GOD, Who hast clothed blossoms and flowers with all glorious and resplendent colours, and hast given clothing for chastity to mankind, and Who wilt hereafter endue them with incorruptible garments of joy in another world, bless, O LORD, this attire of Thy servants, who are now joined together for the procreation of children, that they may wear them in joy and gladness, and ascribe unto Thee glory, honour, praise, and worship, now and for ever and ever. Amen. [Here the Priest shall again sign the attire.]

The Benediction of the Crowns.

The LORD, Who hath crowned the heavens with stars, [Repeat,] and the earth with flowers, and Who upholds all that He has created by His will, may He, through His blessing, adorn your heads with temporal crowns, and fit you to be crowned with unfading crowns; may He support your lives with all needful benefits, increase His peace and safety among you, give you the blessing of sons and daughters, enrich you with wealth, and all manner of possessions, and fill your hearts with joy, and your tongues with thankfulness, that ye may ascribe glory to the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, for ever and ever. Amen. ¶ Here the priest shall again sign the attire. Then they shall take away the attire, and having put it upon the bride they shall bring her forth, and place her on the right hand of the bridegroom.

The Coronation. — Prayer.

Unto Thee, O LORD, Who art good and gracious, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy, the great King of glory, Whose existence is from eternity, we offer glory, honour, praise, and worship, at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. ¶ Then shall follow Psalm cxxiii. 1—4; and if the bridegroom is a priest, Psalm cxi. shall be added thereto; and if a deacon, Psalm ciii. Change. Who has beheld a bridal chamber set up in the midst of the sea, and Hebrew damsels, the daughters of Aaron, walking therein? Prayer. Perfect Thy will, O LORD, in these Thy servants, and direct their undertaking through Thy mercy, that in their union they may ascribe unto Thee glory, honour, praise, and worship, at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. ¶ Then shall follow this anthem. He is thy LORD, worship thou Him. Take timbrels and harps. Give thanks, O Church, the queen, to the Son of the King who hath affianced thee, and introduced thee into His palace, and given thee as a dowry the blood which flowed from His side, and hath clothed thee with a splendid mantle of light which fadeth not away, and hath set on thy head a beautiful and glorious crown, [here they shall place the crowns upon the heads of the bridegroom and bride,] and hath caused thine odour like that of a pure censer to go forth unto all people, and hath beautified thee with blossoms and flowers and with the lilies of August, and hath freed thee from heathenism on Golgotha,—worship His cross whereby He suffered for thee, and raised thee up from thy fall, and honour the priests who labour in singing within thee, and cry aloud, Glory be to Thee, O LORD. [Repeat.]

The king shall rejoice in Thy strength, O LORD. Through Thy great strength, O our SAVIOUR, Thou hast perfected Thy holy Temple, and by Thy grace Thou hast laid the foundations of the Church which Thou hast chosen to Thy glory. Behold, the hosts of heaven and earth rejoice on this day of her sanctification, and supplicate in love that Thy safety may rule over her children, and that she may be a place of refuge to all generations and to all people, and that in Thee they may praise and thank Thee, O our SAVIOUR, and say, Glory be to Thee. The king's daughter has risen up in glory. O Church, the spouse of CHRIST, whom He redeemed from error by His blood, and gave unto thee His body as living food, (whom the wicked slew on Golgotha,) and hath placed in thy hands the cup of salvation in the precious blood which flowed from His side through the wound of the

spear,—give ear and hearken to the voice of the Bridegroom, cease to wonder, and cry aloud to thy SAVIOUR with the voice of thanksgiving, Glory be to Thee, O LORD.

And they shall praise Thy name, for it is great. Great and unlimited praise do the spiritual choirs offer up on the feast of thy sanctification, O glorious and holy Church. The saintly priests cry out and say in thee, Holy, Holy, Holy, art Thou, O LORD, Whose glory rested upon thee, and Who gave thee in pledge His sacraments. Come and let us all praise, give thanks, and say: Keep, O LORD, the Church and her children, by Thy grace, and have compassion upon her. Magnify the LORD our GOD. O Church, magnify, praise, and honour, the heavenly Bridegroom Who descended and dwelt in our humanity, and raised up salvation for thee, and hath set up within thee priests and the order of the Levites, to minister reverently at thy pure altar, and thy children, with the assemblies on high, cry aloud in thee and say, Holy, Holy, Holy, art Thou, from above, and glorified art Thou from below, the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, three Persons, one Essence, to Him be glory.

I will magnify my LORD the King. O CHRIST the King, our Saviour, let Thy safety dwell in Thy Church, and let the angels in heaven rejoice before the throne of Thy Majesty. Fit us, O LORD, to minister in purity in Thy holy Church, the place of Thine abode, that before Thy pure altar we may be meet to sing glory with the assemblies on high to the Essence of Thy Majesty, and to say: Keep, O LORD, this bridegroom and bride through Thy grace, and have mercy upon them. He who is from Everlasting. O GOD, the LORD of the righteous, Who blessed the first righteous men, Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Shem, and Abraham, bless through Thy grace this house and all who dwell therein, and keep in Thy pity this bridegroom and bride, increase Thy peace in their days, and bless their lives through Thy mercy, that they may be Thy children fulfilling Thy will, and that they may leave an inheritance of wealth and all manner of possessions to their children, and unceasingly ascribe endless glory unto Thee at all times.

Keep us as the apple of the eye. Keep in Thy pity, O LORD, this bridegroom and bride from the evil one, and increase toward them Thy compassion, that they may praise Thy Divinity in gladness of soul and in health of body, and be blessed in their union as were Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah, and be fruitful in procreation, so that they may ascribe unto Thee endless praise at all times. The LORD is true in His sayings. When our LORD willed to manifest His glory to His disciples in Cana, He turned the water into wine, and by His decree it became excellent wine. May the power which descended and rested upon those vessels rest upon this house in which we are met together, and the guests which have come from every place. O LORD, preserve their lives, and bless and keep all our company, that they may offer endless praises unto Thee at all times.

Who is like unto Thee, O LORD? O our SAVIOUR, as Thou didst turn the water into wine in Cana, and the guests drank thereof and rejoiced, and glorified Thy name, even so gladden this our assembly that they may praise Thee; sanctify with Thy sanctification this bridegroom and bride, and gladden this brideman and bridemaid with Thy grace, that they may offer unto Thee praise and thanksgiving for Thy benefits towards us at all times. The LORD

preserveth all such as fear Him. Preserve, O LORD, in Thy pity,—bless, O LORD, through Thy grace,—O LORD, O LORD, help in Thy mercy, this bridegroom and bride, and keep them from the evil one; let Thy right hand ever rest upon them, increase to them the overflowing of Thy assistance, pour out upon them Thy benefits, and give them blessed sons and righteous daughters out of Thy treasury, that they may praise Thy holy name at all times.

¶ If the bridegroom be a priest the following shall be said: Clap your hands, all ye nations. Clap thy hands and give praise, O Church the queen, rejoice and exult, thou daughter of light,—all whose glory is from thy FATHER'S house, and thou art adorned with chastity and with spiritual beauty, and mercy is poured out upon the lips of the Bridegroom Who has espoused thee, and through His beauty and glory He has triumphed over the rebels who hate thee, and has beautified thy crown of glory with precious stones, and set it upon thy head, and has made thy walls of beryl, and thy gate of crystal, and has adorned thee with jasper, and made thy garments of pure gold, even as the prophet prophesied by the Spirit, that all kings and their crowns should bow their heads and worship before Him Who maketh sovereigns to humble themselves, and Who anointeth priests,—the glorious Bridegroom Who has espoused thee.—Repay Him praise in the place of the daughter of Sion who darkened His glory, and adored the calf: worship, praise, give thanks, and say: Glory be to Thee.

In Thy majesty and truth ride on and prosper. The Son of God hath crowned the Church which He hath espoused with beauty and glory, and hath called to her wedding the heavenly and earthly assemblies that they may dance in her courts. He hath made her crown of the glorious rays of the light of His hidden FATHER, and hath set it upon her head, and adorned her therewith. And He hath sent out His decree into the streets, and doth call and invite all nations to come and make their offerings at the marriage of the Church the spouse of the KING, whom the Son of the Highest has espoused in His love. The priests then came and presented their orders, the prophets presented their visions, the Apostles their preaching, the martyrs their blood, the hosts above their songs of Holy, Holy, Holy, and all the nations their worship. Blessed is He Who hath set up His throne in His Church, and hath filled her palaces with glory and excellency; and let us praise Him together and say: Glory be to Thee.

All wait upon Thee. Thy servants, O our SAVIOUR, wait for life and endless benefits, and flee in faith, and take refuge under the wings of Thy cross. Keep, in Thy pity, this assembly of Thy worshippers, perfect toward them Thy promises which Thou didst promise in Thy Gospel to those who love Thee, saying: all who believe in Me shall inherit the kingdom and life everlasting. Fit us, O LORD, with all Thy saints to sing praise unto Thee in Thy kingdom. For Thy mercies are better than life. By Thy mercies which are better than life have pity upon Thy servants who cry unto Thee, and flee unto Thee, and in Thy compassion and love come down and help them. Behold from heaven and look upon our worship, incline Thine ear and accept our supplications, and stretch out the hand of Thy help and give health to Thy servants, for we have sinned against Thee exceedingly, and Thou in mercy hast

chastised us as a Father and not as our follies deserved. We pray Thee to have mercy upon us.

For Thou, O LORD, art good. O Thou good GOD Who createdst us by Thy grace, and calledst us Thine own image and likeness, by Thy grace pardon our sins, cleanse our wounds with Thy hyssop, cause the assaults of the deceiver to cease from amongst us, grant that we may perfect the will of Thy Majesty, and sanctify our souls by Thy truth that we may praise Thy name at all times, so that in the day of Thy coming we may rise to thank Thee with the just who were approved before Thee, and who believed and confessed Thy Majesty. Glory be to Thee. Hear, O LORD, my supplication, and accept my prayers. Hear in Thy mercy, O LORD, the prayers and supplications of Thy worshippers. O LORD, open to us the door of Thy Divine treasury at all times. O LORD, show us the light of Thy countenance, and save us from the waves and torments of sin. O LORD, send help to all who are in trouble and adversity. O LORD, let Thy peace dwell in the world. O LORD, keep Thy Church in Thy mercy, hide her under the wings of Thy cross, and have mercy upon her.

Hear my voice, and attend to my prayer. O LORD, accept our prayers. O LORD, answer our petitions. O LORD, open to us the door of Thy treasury that we may enter in and take the forgiveness of our sins. O LORD, fit us to perfect Thy will. O LORD, grant that we may approve ourselves before Thy Majesty. O LORD, pardon our iniquities. O LORD, heal our wounds. O LORD, help us. O LORD, pour out Thy mercies upon us sinners and Thy frail servants who call upon Thee and say, Have mercy upon us. Let Thy mercies overtake us quickly. O LORD, we call upon Thy mercies to come to our help. O LORD, let Thy kingdom which passeth not away come. O LORD, pardon our sins and transgressions. O LORD, let Thy will be perfected in Thy servants. O LORD, lead us not into the temptation of the devil.

O LORD, keep us; O LORD, help us, for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory. To Thee be glory. Answer us, O GOD our SAVIOUR. Answer us, O GOD our SAVIOUR, as Thou didst answer Moses on Mount Sinai. Answer us, O GOD, as Thou didst answer Elijah and Elisha, the prophets of the Spirit. Answer us, O GOD, as Thou didst answer Daniel in the den of wild beasts. Answer us, O GOD, as Thou didst answer Ananias in the fiery furnace; sprinkle our faces with the dew of Thy mercy, cleanse our wounds with Thy hyssop, and have mercy upon us. GOD hath sent forth His mercy and truth. Gabriel was sent from among the angelic ranks, and descended and made known to the daughter of mortality glad tidings, and gave her a bond of peace and safety, and informed her of her most wonderful conception; and as he saluted the Virgin, behold she conceived. Hail! blessed art thou, O mother without marriage, for from thee sprang forth the King, Who is adored by the heights and depths and by all therein: to Him be glory.

Sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. Sweet is the memory of the saints: of the fathers who are heirs, the prophets, the twelve and the seventy apostles, pastors and preachers, holy priests and persecuted hermits, those who are tried with fasting and prayer, those in the country and in convents, teachers and learners, the upright just, and the perfect penitent, who have been before, are now, and who shall yet be, together with the nine circles of angels.

Praise be to Him who strengthened them, and upon us be His mercy. Entreat the LORD and pray before Him. O our pure and holy father,* who didst fight manfully, entreat of GOD who chose thee, that His peace and safety may rest in the four quarters of the world; that wars may cease therein; that kings and priests may live together in love and unity; and that the Church may be established and her children kept; and may thy prayers be a wall of defence at all times to this assembly which has celebrated thy remembrance.

Glory be to the FATHER, and to the SON, and to the HOLY GHOST. A great marriage has the SON of GOD made for His Church which He espoused: He set up her bridal chamber on Mount Sinai by the hands of the son of Amram with great honour; He invited to the feast prophets and apostles, doctors and pastors, and the angels prepared the dishes and brought manna, flesh, and quails, to be her food during her youth. He espoused her through Moses; through John he wrote down her dowry in the river Jordan; David also served thereto by his music and harmony, and by his words: The King's daughter is all glorious within; she is adorned with pure gold. Give thanks, O Church, and worship the LORD our GOD who hath perfected thy beauty, and with thy children call out and say, Glory be to Thee. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. The enemy strove to hinder the ascent of thy spirit to heaven, O Mar Nestorius, but he could not prevail against thy fervour and perseverance; and when the persecutors laid snares for thy holy feet, thou didst flee to thy SAVIOUR instantly. And, now, pray to Him that in His pity He may send the greatness of His mercy to our aid.

And let all the people say, Amen, Amen. Let the right hand of Thy mercy, O LORD JESUS, rest upon Thy people, and the sheep of Thy pasture. O LORD, Thy mercy is for ever towards Thy worshippers; do not leave the work of Thy hands in the power of the devil. O LORD, fulfil Thy promise which Thou didst promise to Thy Twelve: Behold I am with you always even unto the end of the world. Be with us as Thou wert with Thine apostles by the help of Thy grace, and deliver us out of temptation, and give us peaceful times, that we may ascribe praise, honour, and worship to Thy holy name at all times.

Prayer.

Thy blessing, O LORD, thunders throughout the earth, Thy praise ascends up on high, sets crowns on the heads of Thy servants, and perfects their undertakings. Perfect, O LORD, these Thy servants, and bless them in Thy pity, that they may offer up unto Thee, glory, honour, praise, and worship, at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen.

Canon.

Psalm cxxviii. Bless, O LORD, this bridegroom in Thy mercy, and this bride in Thy grace, that they may praise Thy Sovereignty. Through the prayers of Mary who bare Thee, and of the righteous who kept Thy commandments, may Thy worshippers be preserved from the evil one at all times.

Another.

Pour out Thy grace and mercy, O LORD, upon this youthful bridegroom and bride, put far from them all danger, and make them meet for unfading happiness, that in the Eden above they may offer Thee perfect sacrifices of heart and mouth, and live blameless before Thee for ever.

Another.

CHRIST, the glorious Bridegroom, Who in His espousals is an example to us, perfect the foundation and building of this work of His servants and their marriage, pardon their sins, and make their odour to be like that of a rose in paradise, and of myrtle and basil in a garden, and be to this orthodox assembly a wall and refuge. [Repeat.] O CHRIST our SAVIOUR, the heavenly Bridegroom, let Thy grace rest upon the attire of Thy worshippers, that in putting it on as bridegroom and bride they may ever give thanks to Thy Majesty, and praise to Thy holy name.

Litany.

Let us all stand up in joy and gladness, cry aloud and say, O LORD, have mercy upon us. O Thou heavenly Bridegroom, Who espousedst Thy Church through the priest, the son of the priests, John Thy brideman and messenger; we pray Thee to have mercy upon us. O Thou heavenly Bridegroom, Who as a dowry and offering didst shed Thy precious blood for Thy Spouse; we pray Thee to have mercy upon us. O Thou heavenly Bridegroom, Who hast called those above and those below to Thy wedding feast,—the Gospel of Thy kingdom,—we pray Thee to have mercy upon us. O Thou heavenly Bridegroom, Who hast mingled Thy own Blood a spiritual wine for Thy Church to drink, and caused the water of life to flow for the happiness of Thy adorned Spouse; we pray Thee to have mercy upon us. O Thou heavenly Bridegroom, Who gavest all nations rest in calling them to partake of the blessings of Thy marriage table; we pray Thee to have mercy upon us.

O Thou heavenly Bridegroom, Whose espousals abide for ever, give concord to these Thy worshippers who in Thy hope are joined together by law, and give them joy in the work upon which they have entered, and have mercy upon us. O Thou heavenly Bridegroom, Who turnedst the water into wine in Cana, and thereby gladdenedst the guests, gladden this our assembly by Thy grace, and have mercy upon us. For the weal of our sainted father ——, Catholicos and Patriarch, and Mar ——, Metropolitan and Bishop, and for all who minister under them; we pray Thee to have mercy upon us. O merciful GOD, who orderest all in Thy mercy; we pray Thee to have mercy upon us. O Thou who art praised in heaven, and worshipped on earth; we pray Thee to have mercy upon us. Save us, O LORD, and pardon Thy worshippers, this bridegroom and bride, the sponsors and the guests, and all the company met together to celebrate this marriage; and Thou, O CHRIST, the true Bridegroom, have mercy upon us.

Prayer.

Let Thy grace, O LORD, bless this marriage, and let Thy peace and safety rule in the hearts of these Thy servants, and keep and help all those who have taken part in the espousals of our dearly beloved, O Thou who dost gladden with Thy benefits the hearts of Thy servants, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen.

Another.

Blessed is Thy mercy, to be desired are Thy benefits, adorable is Thy grace, glorious are Thy sacraments, sweet is Thy justice, lovely is Thy providence, worthy is Thy glory, and happy are those who fear Thee, O Thou Good GOD Who dost rain blessings upon the thirsty souls of Thy servants, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. ¶ Then the priest shall lay his right hand upon the head of the bridegroom, and shall bless him and say :* Thou bridegroom, who hast humbly bent thy head before the priests, CHRIST our LORD lift up thy head, and make thee to prosper in the two worlds. The blessing of the LORD be upon thee. And now I will begin to bless thee from the Scriptures. May the heat of the sun, and the changes of the moon, do thee no harm. Be thy head ever lifted up, so that thine enemies may be subdued unto thee; be thou always a judge and never thyself liable to be judged.

CHRIST order all thy doings: may He be thy keeper, and bless thee in thy going out and coming in, and enrich thy merchandize. Be thou victorious over thine enemies, that they may be like dust under thy feet; and be thou prosperous both openly and secretly, and have thou ever a good and gracious name. May thy cup be always full like the pearly Pison; and may thy children abound like the overflowing Gihon. May thy seed increase exceedingly, like the swelling Hiddekel; and multiply throughout every quarter like the Euphrates among the nations. The health of thy body and soul together be doubled; and thy riches be two-fold, heavenly and earthly. The shadow of the lightsome cross keep thee by night and by day: and may thy house prosper and advance so that thou mayest rejoice therein at all times. Thy knowledge be like glittering gold in the presence of thy fellows; and the care of the LORD guide thy steps in light.

May the crown upon thy head and the goodly attire upon thy body be blessed: blessed also be thy bed and thy bridal chamber, and blessed be thy household and wealth. Thy sleep be perfected in rest, so that thou mayest wake up in the morning with joy; at mid-day may blessings gather around thee, and mayest thou find peace at all times. Mayest thou go from strength to strength and from glory to glory; rise up from one degree to another, and advance from virtue to virtue. Mayest thou ever possess exalted rank, and a good and lovely name; and may GOD increase thy honour like that of David and Constantine. May the lovely branches of thy loins stand before thee in joy; and surround thy table like the goodly plants of the olive. When thou puttest forth thy right hand may the right hand of the LORD be with thee: and when thou stretchest out thy left hand may His help accompany thee.

May thy doings in the world be wrought in life and peace; and may the evil one never come nigh unto thee by night or by day. May our prayers be accepted and our petitions granted

on your behalf; be thou a father to great men, and let priests come forth from thy loins. May thy root be established before all men as was Abraham; and the LORD make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh whose father was Joseph. Have thou pre-eminence and wealth in righteousness, and let the Divine care ever encompass thee with a high wall. May thy name go forth among kings, and thy report among nobles; and may the fruits of thy love increase and be kept evermore from evil. The glorious TRINITY grant us every blessing; and may GOD be glorified in thee, and let us all say, Amen, Amen. ¶ Then the Priest shall lay his right hand on the head of the bride, and bless her on this wise:

O GOD, Who dost bless the righteous, bless this our bride who has been crowned, adorn her inwardly with loveliness, and beautify her outwardly with excellency. Bless the house which she shall enter as Thou didst the Empress Helena, and sanctify the bridal chamber allotted to her after the custom of believers. Multiply the treasure of her jewels and ornaments; and give to her husband when he goes in to her the blessings which he awaits. Let her house be free from strife and debate with her husband; and let the excellency of her honour and report increase among her companions. Give her joy of heart and enlighten her eyes; heal all the pains of her body, and pardon the sins of her soul. May she be held up as a good example to brides; and may she be blessed with the words of the Priests and the sayings of the deacons.

Purify her body with health, and adorn her face with modesty; may her name be good, and may she ever live in rest. Look down from heaven, O Thou highest, and bless Thine handmaid and her husband. By Thy right hand she was created, may she be kept evermore by Thy grace. Make ready for her righteousness, life, and health, out of Thy treasury; and in Thy mercy grant her requests with full and overflowing measures. Let Thy right hand rest upon her, that she may hide her under Thy wings; and deliver her from the evil one and his powers, that she may be an abode for Thine honour. Let all the righteous women among Jews and Gentiles be as a mirror unto her; and may she ever be remembered with them. Make her, in Thy mercy, a follower of Sarah, and bless her children as Thou didst Isaac. Bless her as Thou didst bless Rebecca, and keep her children as Thou didst Jacob.

Make her as lovely as was Rachel, and her seed as Joseph; bless her womb as that of Leah, that she may be a mother unto many. May Thy grace bless her as Asenath, and may she bring forth and multiply like Ephraim; may she be like Jochabed, and her children like Moses. Fill her soul with a righteous hope like unto Elizabeth and Aaron; and may her children be like Eliezer and Ithamar. Help her as Thou didst Zipporah, and may her children live like Gershom; and like Mary may her mouth sing hymns and praise. Divide her an inheritance in the earth like Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Mileah, and Tirzah, who possessed the heritage of their father. Let safety dwell in her house, and increase of peace in her borders; let priests come of her children, and deacons of her seed. May her offspring inherit wealth, houses and fields; may her sons recline on pillows and her daughters on carpets.

May her husband be glad, and her parents rejoice greatly; and on her knees let goodly sons and daughters be nurtured who shall perfect Thy will. Multiply her seed as the sand, and

as the stars of heaven; and enrich her greatly with wealth like the Jordan in the month of August. Let Thy handmaid, O LORD, be blessed with the words of benediction, and by the prayers of Thy saints, all the days of her life, that she may ascribe praise and glory to the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Conclusion.

Upon thee, O glorious bridegroom, thou delectable rose wreathed in the crown of the heavenly Bridegroom; and upon thee, O beauteous, pure, and virgin bride, who art adorned with the graces of the Church, and upon thee, thou honoured brideman, who art likened unto John the Baptist; and upon thee, thou lovely and revered bridemaid; and upon all this our assembly, may the peace, mercy, blessing and grace of our adorable GOD rest and overflow at all times, and for ever and ever. ¶ Here the Priest shall sign the assembly with the sign of the cross.

The Setting Up of the Bridal Chamber.*

Prayer. Glory be to GOD in the highest, &c. Our FATHER, &c.

Prayer.

May the adorable name of Thy glorious Trinity be ever worshipped, glorified, honoured, praised, blessed, and magnified, in heaven and in earth, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. Psalm exxi.

Prayer.

Unto Thee, O Thou Who art the great and excellent, the strong and glorious, the mighty Man of war, the powerful, the full of mercy, the King of glory, the Existent from eternity; we give thanks, worship, and praise, at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen.

Anthem.

Let Thy grace be upon us, O LORD. In Thy grace, O merciful FATHER, keep this house and those who dwell therein from devils and wicked men, and increase in it all manner of stores, love, peace, and concord, and health of body and soul. He shall be blessed in the generation of the just. By angels the house of our father Abraham was blessed, and by the LORD of angels the house of Zacchaeus was blessed; may Thy Trinity dwell in this house also which Thy worshippers have entered, and may it be blessed in the generation of the just. The LORD is true in His sayings. O our LORD CHRIST, Who in Thy Gospel spakest to the assembly of Thy disciples, saying: Into whatsoever house ye enter, and they receive you, I will bless them; bless, in Thy grace, this house of Thy worshippers, and let Thy security and peace dwell therein.

Let not the desire of the wicked come to pass. Drive far off the devil who is the enemy of all righteousness from this house, lest he enter and rule therein; confirm the foundations

thereof on the rock of faith, and increase in it life everlasting. Our GOD is a strong refuge. O CHRIST, the refuge and true hope of the distressed, be Thou, O LORD, a wall of defence to Thy worshippers, keep them from the evil one, and heal and cure their wounds in Thy divine compassion, O Thou merciful Forgiver of sins. Thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth. O CHRIST, our hope in whom we have trusted, have mercy upon us, drive away from us the evil one who hates us without a cause, and let Thy all-merciful right hand be a defence to our souls, for our eyes are fixed on Thee at all times.

In the sea and in all deeps. At sea and on land they call upon Thee to come to their help; him who calleth unto Thee from the sea Thou hearest, and him who calleth unto Thee from the dry land Thou dost not overlook. We also call upon Thee, O LORD: come Thou therefore to our help, and save us from the power of the evil one. It is He who maketh wars to cease in all the world. O CHRIST, Who by Thy blood hast reconciled the heights with the depths, make all kings and priests to be of one accord; in Thy pity establish Thy Church, that through Thy grace, O Thou Merciful, one symbol of faith may rule over the universe. The LORD preserveth such as trust in Him. May Thy worshippers be kept evermore from the wiles of the deceiver through the prayers of the Virgin Mary the blessed Mother, and give us to perfect Thy will in word and deed, and to sing praises unto Thee at all times.

Glory be to the FATHER, and to the SON, and to the HOLY GHOST. May this house be blessed by the Trinity wherewith the righteous believers, the fathers of old, were blessed,—may it be blessed from this time forth for evermore. Keep it, O LORD, and all who dwell therein from all evil and adversity, and may it be filled with good things as was the house of Abraham; may its wealth increase and multiply as that of the house of Job; and may it continue from this time forth and for evermore, through the prayers of the sainted Virgin Mary. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Bless, O LORD, this house, and may it be blessed from this time forth for evermore. Bless, O LORD, those who dwell therein with all the blessings of Thy living and holy mouth. Bless, O LORD, their labour, their wealth, and their possessions. Bless, O LORD, their seed, their fields, and their corn. Bless, O LORD, their meeting together. Bless, O LORD, their concord. Bless, O LORD, their children, and pardon and forgive their transgressions that they may be made meet for Thy bridal chamber.

Prayer.

The blessing of Him Who blesses all, the pity of Him Who has pity upon all, and the keeping of the adorable GOD be with us, amongst us, and round about us, at all times, to keep us from the evil one and his powers, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen. Canon. Psalm lxvii. Bless, O LORD, the bridal chamber of Thy servants, and keep the bridegroom and the bride who dwell therein from the evil one. Send help and salvation, O LORD, to our souls, which flee to Thy cross. O Thou, Who hast set up a glorious bridal chamber for the Bridegroom who espoused through the Spirit, crown with a crown of light, O CHRIST, Thy worshippers, and make ready a time of rest for this our assembly, that we may thank Thee with a joyful heart, and let Thy grace rest upon us all.

Doxology. With the blessing which rested upon the marriage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, may this bridegroom and bride, and this brideman and bridemaid be blessed. Mary rejoiced when she bare Him, and John when he baptized Him, and the heavens and earth were glad because He is the Star Which arose out of Jacob. Holy GOD, Holy and mighty, &c.

Prayer.

Thy name, O LORD our GOD, be praised, Thy divinity be adored, Thy sovereignty be revered, Thy self-existence be magnified, and the eternal mercies of Thy adorable Trinity be with Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen.

Another.

In heaven and on earth, O LORD, Thy divinity is blessed, Thy sovereignty is worshipped, and the adorable name of Thy glorious Trinity is sanctified, glorified, praised, and exalted at all times, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen.

Another.

May the prayers of the holy Virgin, and the supplications of the blessed Mother, and the petitions of her who is full of grace, —Mary the blessed,—and the great power of the victorious Cross, and the Divine help, and the prayers of S. John the Baptist, be with us evermore, O LORD of all, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Amen.

Conclusion.

O LORD, Who didst bless the righteous of old, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and didst increase, multiply, exalt, and pardon them,—bless Thou these Thy servants, and bless their pure marriage bed, that they may live together in love and concord, and that their children may be meet to attain the ornament of this day, and that they may be worthy to ascribe glory unto Him Who has given them to be partakers of one another,—may He perfect you and all this our assembly, and may His mercies abound towards us for ever through the prayers of Mary the mother of life and light, and through the prayers of all the saints and martyrs of the LORD, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn.

May Thy joy be with us, and Thy peace dwell among us, and may Thy Church dwell in this bridal chamber for ever. The bridegroom in his chamber is like the sun that riseth out of the East, his rays run through the firmament, and his light giveth joy to the world. The bridegroom in his chamber is like the tree of life in the Church, whose fruit is good for food, and the leaves thereof for medicine. The bridegroom in his chamber is like the spring which runs through Eden, of which the wise have drunk, and by which the foolish have obtained knowledge. The bridegroom in his chamber is like an unblemished pearl, which the chief among the merchants bought, and through which they were enriched and ennobled.

Another.

Solomon undertook to build a house for the LORD of his LORD, as he was commanded by GOD and by David. In the second month he laid the foundations thereof, and in the seventh he perfected the building; and the king placed therein a large brazen sea and twelve oxen supporting it. The horse neighs, the lion roars, the ox bellows, and the swallow twitters therein in the morning tide. He set up the sea on the southern side because all springs and rivers flow towards the south; the twelve oxen are the twelve months, three at each angle for spring, summer, autumn, and winter. He built a wonderful house for the daughter of Pharaoh: six hundred slaves come and go, and worship before her. Who is this like a golden cup full of milk in which are dropped drops of blood? Who is this from betwixt whose eyes the sun riseth, and when she openeth her lips spices flow out of her mouth?

Who is this clad in embroidered garments, and whose LORD the kings and princes of the earth do worship? It is the Church whose report is goodly, whose spouse is great, and He is the King of the universe. Praise be to His name, and worship be to His honour.

Another.

Blessed is He Who hath built for His Church a house not made with hands, and hath raised and set her up on high according to His promise. The elect Church saith to CHRIST in her supplications: Show me from the Scriptures what dowry Thou wilt give unto me? O lovely Spouse, incline thine ear and hearken to My voice; leave thy father and mother, and come follow Me, for I am thy Bridegroom. Behold, I flee to Thy love, and I contemn all the idols of the heathen, and leave off worshipping them, and flee to Thy cross. I have espoused thee through water and the Spirit, and have saved thee from Satan and from death: beware that thou become not another's, for there is none other that can help thee as I can. If thou art faithful unto Me, O thou daughter of the poor, I will make ready for thee a bridal chamber above, and will call prophets, apostles, and martyrs to thy wedding.

Thy commandments are dearer unto me than gold or pearls; and the words of Thy mouth are sweeter unto me than honey and the honey-comb.

The Prayer over the Bride after Forty Days, and the Churching of Women

The following prayer is directed to be said over a bride in the church forty days after marriage: O Thou pitiful and compassionate CHRIST, our GOD, Whose goodness overfloweth towards all, pour out Thy grace and help upon this bride, bless her in Thy mercy, and make her to cleave to that which is good, to eschew evil, and to do such things as Thou shalt approve of, that from her bosom may come forth fruits of joy to be brought up in Thy Holy Church. And grant that she may live according to Thy will before her spouse, that he may ever appear comely in her eyes; with her ears may she always hearken to his commands and approve of them; with her mouth may she speak of him with reverence; with her heart truly love him; with her hands perform his will; and with her feet walk evermore in holiness and righteousness. And grant that this bride and her bridegroom, and their brideman and bridemaid, may be preserved from all evil through the prayers of Thy mother, the second heaven, the blessed saint Mary, and through the prayers of all Thy saints, now and for ever and ever. Amen. [Then the Priest shall sign her head with the sign of the cross.]

The Churching of Women.

¶ Benediction to be said over an infant and his mother forty days after childbirth, when his mother shall bring him to the church. O LORD GOD Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, and all that therein is, Who didst ordain a law to the fathers of old, commanding that every male child of forty days old should be brought to Thy holy temple, and there offer an offering to the Priest, who should pray over him that he might be clean;—Thou, O LORD, didst perfect this thing by causing Thy well-beloved Son to be taken to the temple, He being forty days old, when Simeon took Him in his arms, and confessed, and gave thanks, and asked of Him the dissolution of his days;—now, O LORD GOD, bless and sanctify this infant, N. who has come to Thy holy Church, which is the abode of righteousness, to ask of Thee graciously to increase the milk of his nurse, and that he may be kept from the evil one and his powers, and be brought up in holiness and in the true faith all the days of his life. Amen.

Benediction to be said over the mother. And thou, O mother of this infant, be thou stirred up in the inner man of the heart by doing good works, that from thy loins may come forth sons and daughters who shall approve themselves before GOD in righteousness, that thou mayest feast upon the blessings of the LORD, and be kept thou and thy child from all evil, through the prayers of the Virgin, who is clothed with light, the second heaven, Saint Mary the mother of CHRIST, our GOD, and through the prayers of all the saints, now and for ever and ever. Amen. [Here the Priest shall sign over their heads with the sign of the cross.]

Source. English translation by G. P. Badger, from ***The Nestorians and their Rituals***, by the Rev. George Percy Badger, volume 2 (London: Joseph Masters, 1852); public domain. The text was read by machine (Mistral OCR) from a scan of the 1852 edition at the Internet Archive and has not been proofread against the printed book. SermonIndex has removed running heads and page numbers, joined words split across lines, and divided the text into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Footnotes and the editor's introduction are left out. Badger's long essays on the beliefs and history of the Church of the East, the other chapters of this volume, the appendices and the index are also left out. Only the translated service is given here, with the directions to the priest and deacon that Badger prints in the text. Badger's note on the Chaldean changes, the table of the degrees within which marriage is forbidden, the rules on divorce and the other canons of marriage, which he adds after the service, are also left out. No original-language text is shown beside it, and no modern English version has been made.

Licence. The translation was published in 1852 and is in the public domain.