

## Special Ceremonies



### **Arras Coin Ceremony**

A Coin wedding is usually a Latin tradition going back to Spanish and Roman days and is also referred to as Las arras or Las arras matrimoniales.

During the coin ceremony, or arras ceremony, the groom drops 13 coins into the bride's hands representing her dowry and his vow to support her. By some it is thought that the thirteen coins symbolizes Jesus and the twelve apostles. By others it represents the twelve months of the year and the the couple's honeymoon. Some people think that it represents 13 core values shared by the couple. It's still a deeply entrenched tradition nonetheless.

A Filipino tradition is that the ring bearer will also take down the aisle the coins in a coin purse, on a pillow or an ornate box. The thefficiant will then say a blessing, wishing them prosperity. He then gives the coins to both the bride and groom, usually pouring the contents of the purse or box into the bride and groom's open palms.

### Sample coin wedding ceremony

*“These 13 coins traditionally represent the promise of the groom to support his wife and the wife's dedication to her husband. But today, more than this, it represents that GROOM and BRIDE are united in love and harmony.*

*GROOM and BRIDE, accept that these coins that represent that your love and dedication to each other will be the true prosperity of your marriage to each other. Promise that you will love and support each other for eternity. Please repeat after me:*

*I, GROOM, promise you that I will love and support you forever.*

*I, BRIDE, promise you that I will love and support you forever.*

*In exchanging these coins, GROOM and BRIDE are vowing undying devotion and support. As we witness their acceptance of these coins, we also witness their willingness to be blessed with each other's company, with each other's dedication and to always be there in heart and soul for each other in good times and in bad times."*



**Unity Candle**

During a Unity Candle wedding ceremony the mothers of the bride and groom light candles to the side of the unity (center) candle which represent the separate lives, families and experiences before the wedding day. After the exchange of vows, but before the exchange of rings the bride and groom take each side candle and light the unity candle together, uniting the families and experiences into one.

The wedding ceremony verbage for a unity candle can be the following, or a personalized unity candle ceremony can be created by you. This is spoken by the officiant, but of course, it can be spoken by the wedding couple:

**Sample Unity Candle Wedding Vow – 1**

“BRIDE and GROOM, the two separate candles symbolize your separate lives, separate families and separate sets of friends. Please light the candles and that together you light the center candle. The individual candles represent your lives before today. Lighting the center candle represents that your two lives are now joined to one light, and represents the joining together of your two families and sets of friends to one. ”

OR

**Sample Candle Ceremony – 2**

“GROOM AND BRIDE have chosen to affirm their love by the lighting of a unity candle. They have also asked their families to participate in the lighting ceremony. In so doing, they signal their desire to not only join as one in their union, but to unite two families together as one.

I want to take a moment to explain what the lighting of these candles represents to them: From every human being there rises a light. And when two souls that are destined for each other find one another, their streams of light flow together and a single brighter light goes forth from their united being.

### **And Finish**

**GROOM AND BRIDE:** The brightness of the candles that your families have lit – and the brightness of the unity candle that you will together light – will shine throughout your lives, giving you courage and reassurance in the darkness. May the candle’s warmth give you shelter from the cold. May its energy fill your spirits with strength and joy.

As you light the Unity Candle, I want to ask you – and all your friends and family that are present today – to see the brightness of the flame as a symbol of the brightness that your own life brings to this new family. As you lift your candles to light your family unity candle together, so may your love for each other light up your life as a family.

Your mother’s have each lit a candle for each of your families. **GROOM AND BRIDE,** please use those candles to light the Unity Candle together.”

### **Handfasting**



Handfasting wedding ceremonies are Celtic wedding rituals. It involves the tying of hands together to symbolize the coming together and remaining in love together forever.

Sample Handfasting Ceremony

“As this knot is tied, so are your lives now bound. Woven into this cord, into its very fibers, are all the hopes of your friends and family, and of yourselves, for your new life together. With the entwining of this knot I tie all the desires, dreams, love, and happiness wished here in this place to your lives for as long as love shall last.

In the joining of hands and the fashion of a knot, so are your lives now bound, one to another. By this cord you are thus bound to your vow. May this knot remain tied for as long as love shall last. May this cord draw your hands together in love, never to be used in anger. May the vows you have spoken never grow bitter in your mouths.

Two entwined in love, bound by commitment and fear, sadness and joy, by hardship and victory, anger and reconciliation, all of which brings strength to this union. Hold tight to one another through both good times and bad, and watch as your strength grows. Remember that it is not this physical cord, but what it represents, that keeps you together.”

### **Sand ceremony**



#### **Sample Sand Ceremony – 1**

“Today, this relationship is symbolized through the pouring of these two individual containers of sand one, representing you BRIDE and all that you were, all that you are, and all that you will ever be, and the other representing you, GROOM, and all that you were and all that you are, and all that you will ever be. As these two containers of sand are poured into the third container, the individual containers of sand will no longer exist, but will be joined together as one. Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be.”

#### **Sample Sand Ceremony – 2**

“BRIDE and GROOM, today you join your separate lives together. The two separate bottles of sand symbolize your separate lives, separate families and separate sets of friends. They represent all that you are and all that you’ll ever be as an individual. They also represent your lives before today. As these two containers of sand are poured into the third container, the individual containers of sand will no longer exist, but will be joined together as one. Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be.”

### **Sample Sand Ceremony – 3**

“Today, BRIDE and GROOM, have chosen to commemorate their marriage through the celebration of the Sand Ceremony. This ceremony symbolizes the inseparable union of BRIDE and GROOM into a new and eternal marital relationship. Bride and Groom will simultaneously pour separate containers of sand into a common vessel. Each grain of sand in their separate containers represents a unique and separate moment, decision, feeling or event that helped shaped Bride and Groom into the separate and unique individuals that they are today. As they pour their separate containers of sand into a common vessel, those separate and independent individuals will cease to exist. Instead they will merge into a loving and supportive marital community. BRIDE and GROOM, just as the grains of sand can never be separated into their individual containers again, so will your marriage be.”

### **Sample Sand Ceremony – 4**

“OFFICIANT: Please note this empty glass. Glass, itself, is made from sand and the sands of time have come together, melting into one piece to make this vessel. The sands of time should remind us all of our eternal love and our mortality. Today BRIDE and GROOM have chosen to represent their love to each other in a special sand ceremony. Please BRIDE and GROOM, take your separate glass of sand and alternate the pouring of sand into this joining vessel and united, repeat after me: You are my love for eternity. I blend with you. My heart is like these grains of sands, merging with yours. I am yours. You are mine. We are together forever like the sand, like the wind. We are one.”

### **Rose Ceremony**



There are 2 ways to incorporate a rose into a wedding.

A Rose to Mothers of the Bride and Groom is usually done at the beginning of the wedding ceremony. Either the bride and groom can offer a rose to each mother after the presentation of the bride, or they can give a rose at the beginning of the ceremony after prompting by the wedding officiant. The ceremony officiant could say:

“This wedding celebration is a joining of two unique families who stood separate until today. Today we unite these families by the marriage of BRIDE and GROOM. BRIDE and GROOM would each like to honor the separateness of their families and now, the togetherness, with the giving of a rose to their mothers. They would also like to acknowledge the love and sacrifice that each mother has made to make her children who they are today – – a man and woman who are ready to be in a committed, loving marriage of their own.”

(Bride and Groom, together, present a rose to each mother)

A Wedding Rose Ceremony is a part of the wedding ceremony that takes place usually after the wedding vows. The Wedding Officiant or the Maid of Honor and Best Man can offer the rose to the Bride and the Groom at the appropriate moment. Often a rose ceremony can go like this:

**Officiant:** After the exchanging of rings, your first gift to each other, as husband and wife, is a single rose. The rose is a symbol of love so it is appropriate that it is your first gift.

Please exchange your first gift as husband and wife. (GROOM GIVES A ROSE TO BRIDE.)

**GROOM:** (Bride’s name) I give you this rose as a symbol of my love. It began as a tiny, tightly closed bud and blossomed into this perfect rose that opened with the warmth of the sun, just as my love for you has grown in the warmth of your soul.

(BRIDE GIVES A ROSE TO GROOM.)

**BRIDE:** (Groom’s name) I give you this rose as a symbol of my love. It began as a tiny, tightly closed bud and blossomed into this perfect rose that opened with the warmth of the sun, just as my love for you has grown in the warmth of your soul.

**Officiant:** GROOM and BRIDE, in remembrance of this day, as a reaffirmation of your love and of the vows you have spoken here today please give each other a single red rose each year on your anniversary. In the best of marriages there are difficult times. There are times of hurtful words, times of neglect, times when we must wait patiently to be together again. Those may be times when the words you really need to speak are difficult. I ask that you remember this moment and that when words fail you, that you place a single rose on your spouse’s pillow as a way to say, “I remember our vow,” and “I love you”. Let this exchanging of roses be the beginning of a lifelong tradition of unspoken love.

### **Wine Ceremony**



There are many ways to perform a wine ceremony.

One wine wedding ceremony is to pour a glass of wine, talk about it's aging and mellowing and about sharing wine together, then each the bride and groom drink from it. The couple can pass the wine glass to their family members as a remembrance of the history of their families, now united.

Another version of the wine ceremony is that 2 glasses are poured and the bridal couple drinks while their arms are locked.

The Jewish wedding calls for drinking wine and then taking a glass, wrapped in a cloth, and crushing it underfoot by the groom. Since many wine glasses can actually cut through a shoe, most couples will use a light bulb wrapped in a cloth or a keepsake velvet bag.

Similar to the sand ceremony the couple can have a glass of white and a glass of red during the wedding ceremony, each drink from each glass and then pour their wine together in a separate glass, and the new glass of wine looked like a rosé. We can speak about the color of their wines and the blending of their hearts together to become one. These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love for you, that are holding yours on your wedding day, as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow, and forever.

### **Blessing of the Hands**



These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love for you, that are holding yours on your wedding day, as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow, and forever. These are the hands that will work alongside yours, as together you build your future. These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years,

and with the slightest touch,  
will comfort you like no other.  
These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief fills your mind.  
These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes;  
tears of sorrow, and tears of joy.  
These are the hands that will tenderly hold your children.  
These are the hands that will help you to hold your family as one.  
These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it.  
And lastly, these are the hands that even when wrinkled and aged,  
will still be reaching for yours,  
still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch.