

## The Service of the Betrothal

The bridesmaids and the groomsmen make their entrance to the church yard followed by the bride accompanied by her father. The bride and groom stand in front of the altar table.

In the tradition of the Greek Orthodox wedding service vows are not exchanged. The couple's presence before the congregation signifies their wish to be joined in matrimony. Their mutual intention is also symbolised by the lighting of the two candles on either side of the altar table. Prayers are offered on behalf of the bride and groom that they be granted with perfect and peaceful love.

The rings are blessed and the bride and groom are then also blessed with the rings. This is performed three times starting first from the groom to the bride, and then from the bride to the groom. The weaving motion between bride and groom represents their lives being entwined into one. The wedding rings are then placed on the ring fingers of the right hands of both the bride and groom. The rings are exchanged three times further emphasising the union of their lives.

The betrothal closes with a final prayer commemorating the biblical event of Isaac's engagement to Rebecca, which seals the placement of the rings.

## The Service of the Marriage

### The Crowning

A series of prayers are offered. The right hands of the bride and groom are joined to symbolise their love and unity. The bride and groom are crowned with wedding crowns that are traditionally wreaths of lemon blossom joined by a ribbon. This also symbolizes their unity. The bride and groom are blessed with the crowns three times and then the crowns are placed upon their heads. The crowns are exchanged over the heads of the bride and grooms to seal the union.

### The Blessing of the common cup

A cup containing a small portion of wine is presented to the bride and groom: this is not Holy Communion. The cup is offered to the newly joined husband and wife, representing their equal sharing of joy and sorrow, the token of a life of harmony and a reminder that they are to bear one another's burdens.

### The Procession

The newly joined husband and wife proceed around the altar table three times celebrating the union and a series of hymns are sung. The hymns serve to remind the newly married couple of the love they are to have for each other in marriage - a love that seeks not its own but is willing to sacrifice it's all for the one loved. The circle symbolizes eternity. By circling around the table, the couple also signify their oath to preserve their marriage bond forever. At the conclusion of the procession the Crowns are then removed, the couple's joined hands are separated and a prayer is offered that the newlyweds are granted a long, happy and fruitful life together.

## The Wedding Favours

The traditional Greek wedding favour is a gift of sugar-coated almonds (koufeta). The almonds are placed symbolically on the tray with the wedding crowns and are blessed. They are later offered to the guests.

The white sugar coating of the almond symbolizes purity. The egg shape represents the new life, which begins with the marriage. The hardness of the almond represents the endurance of the marriage and the sweetness of the sugar symbolizes the sweetness of future life.

The almonds are always offered in odd numbers because odd numbers are indivisible, just as The Bride and The Groom shall remain undivided.

## Our Bridal Party

Sam Lurcock  
Head Bridesmaid  
(koumbara)

Stefanos Kornaros  
Head Groomsman  
(koumbaros)

Faith Masters  
Ria Masters  
Maddie Masters  
Bridesmaids

Yannos Polychroniadis  
Constantinos Christoforou  
Constantinos Kornaros  
Groomsmen

Charalambos Kornaros  
Page boy

Ophelia Kornaros  
Flower girl