



When we hear the word “exorcism,” most of us think of dramatic movie scenes or stories of demonic possessions requiring the intervention of a priest authorized by the Church. However, few Catholics are aware that the Church, in her ancient wisdom, has included exorcism rites in many of her sacramental celebrations. And there is one exorcism in particular that almost all of us have received, yet it is rarely discussed: the exorcism contained in the marriage rite according to the old Roman Ritual.

Exorcism in Marriage?

Yes, although it is not widely known today, in the traditional liturgy of marriage—before the liturgical reforms of the 20th century—there were specific prayers asking for protection against the influence of the devil over the spouses and their future family life. These exorcisms were not dramatic like solemn exorcisms performed in cases of possession, but they played a crucial role: protecting the spouses from the influence of the evil one and invoking God’s grace so that their union would be fruitful and holy.

This rite included supplications to God to remove all evil influence from the new household being established and from the relationship between husband and wife. In a sense, this matrimonial exorcism was a declaration of spiritual warfare: the Church, in her wisdom, knew that the devil hates marriage because it is an image of the union between Christ and His Church (Eph 5:25-32), and so he seeks to destroy it in many ways.

Marriage and Spiritual Warfare

Christian marriage is not merely a civil contract or a relationship based solely on feelings. It is a sacrament, a visible sign of God’s grace, and therefore a constant target of attacks from the devil.

From the book of Genesis, the evil one has sought to destroy marital union. It was within the marriage of Adam and Eve that he sowed discord, sin, and the rupture of their relationship with God. And he continues to do so today, promoting divorce, infidelity, selfishness, and ideologies that attempt to redefine marriage based on purely human criteria, ignoring its divine essence.

For this reason, in the traditional liturgy, the Church explicitly prayed for divine protection over the spouses, recognizing that their union would not be easy and that they would constantly battle against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil.



What Was the Exorcism in the Marriage Rite?

The old Roman Ritual contained specific prayers that included supplications for God to free the spouses from any power of the evil one. In particular, there were blessings over the wedding rings and over the bride, accompanied by signs of the cross and exorcism formulas.

One of the most significant moments was the blessing of the wedding ring. This was not merely a symbolic object but was considered a sign of the covenant blessed by God. The prayer stated:

"Bless, O Lord, this ring which we give in Your name. Grant that the one who wears it may maintain an integral faith and a constant obedience to Your will."

In the ancient formula, prayers were offered so that the devil would have no power over the bride, that she would be faithful, pure, and strong in her vocation. Prayers were also said for the fruitfulness of the marriage, invoking God's protection over the children who would be born from the union.

In some local rites, even the threshold of the new home of the spouses was blessed, imploring that it would be a place of peace where the evil one could not enter.

Why Did This Exorcism Disappear from Marriage?

With the liturgical reform following the Second Vatican Council, many of these prayers were removed from the new Marriage Ritual. The main reason was a shift in the understanding of the liturgy: the focus moved towards a more positive language, centered on God's grace and love, rather than emphasizing the battle against the devil.

However, this does not mean that the spiritual danger has disappeared. In fact, now more than ever, marriage faces unprecedented spiritual threats. The crisis of the family, confusion about the identity and role of husband and wife, and the disregard for marital fidelity show that the spiritual battle remains ongoing.

Can This Prayer Be Recovered?

Although the exorcism of marriage is no longer found in the modern ritual, spouses can and should seek God's blessing and protection from the evil one in their union. Some ways to do this include:



1. **Consecrating the marriage to the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph**, asking for their intercession and protection.
2. **Having a priest bless the home**, especially with holy water and prayers of deliverance.
3. **Using sacramentals**, such as blessed medals and holy water in the home.
4. **Asking a priest for the traditional blessing of the wedding ring**, even if it was not used in the ceremony.
5. **Praying together daily**, especially the Rosary, which is a powerful weapon against the devil.
6. **Living a sacramental life**, with frequent reception of the Eucharist and Confession to remain strengthened against temptations.

Conclusion: A Necessary Exorcism for Our Time

Marriage is a sacred vocation and a spiritual battle. Although the exorcism rite in marriage has disappeared from the modern liturgy, the need for divine protection remains the same. The Church teaches us that the devil has not stopped attacking marriage and the family, and as Catholics, we must be aware of this reality and seek God's grace to live our vocation with fidelity and love.

So, if you ever thought you had never received an exorcism, now you know that in your marriage—or in that of your parents or grandparents—the Church had already prayed for deliverance from the evil one. And even though the liturgical formula has changed, the battle remains ongoing. This is why we must not forget that every Christian marriage is a fortress that needs to be defended with God's grace.

“What God has joined together, let no man separate” (Mt 19:6). And certainly not the devil.