**Rite for the Protection of the Married Couple by the Wedding Party**

My dear bridesmaids and groomsmen, you were chosen especially by N. and N. to stand in as special witnesses because of your close affiliation with these two individuals who are about to become one in the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony.

This Sacred Commitment is no small undertaking. It requires from you, frequent affirmation and intercessory prayer on their behalf. Indeed, as they enter into a lifelong union, N. and N. look forward to celebrating many joyful occasions in life, and will suffer together through life’s challenges, disappointments and sorrows.

Yet, they know, they never have to experience these things on their own. Indeed, the grace of the Sacrament will always be available to them from God. It is a source of strength for them and for all married couples united in holiness. Mother Church, Herself, maintains open doors for them and for all of us, even when She is neglected by her prodigal children.

Yet, as special participants in this Holy Sacrament, it is incumbent on all of you to help this couple in their commitment to each other and to God. It will be your responsibility to encourage them when their life gets complicated and to celebrate with them the joys that Christian marriage brings to those who are faithful; especially when they bring forth children into the world.

True friendship always seeks what is best for the beloved. This was exemplified for us on the Cross by Our Savior. If your friendship makes your ready to stand up for this couple and their life together as man and wife, then I ask you:

Will you support N. and N. in their Marriage, encouraging them to live a life of fidelity and grace, chastising them when they are being led astray?

I will

Will you give good counsel to N. and N. in good times and in bad, reminding them of the commitment they will make to God in your presence?

I will

In faithfulness and friendship, will you regard N. and N., once united, as one family, indeed, one person, in spirit and in truth? (over)

I will

May God in His Wisdom provide you with the gifts needed to be a true friend and a blessing for this couple about to live a life of holiness and virtue. We ask all of this in Christ Jesus, Our Lord.

Amen.